

THIS MAGAZINE IS **HAUNTED**

OCT.
10¢
NO. 7



DOCTOR DEATH

HEED THIS
WARNING!
BEWARE!

IF YOU
ARE LIKE
**THE MAN
WHO SAW
TOO MUCH!**



THIS MAGAZINE IS **HAUNTED**

WEIRD!
EERIE!

SPINE-
TINGLING!



THIS MAGAZINE IS
HAUNTED



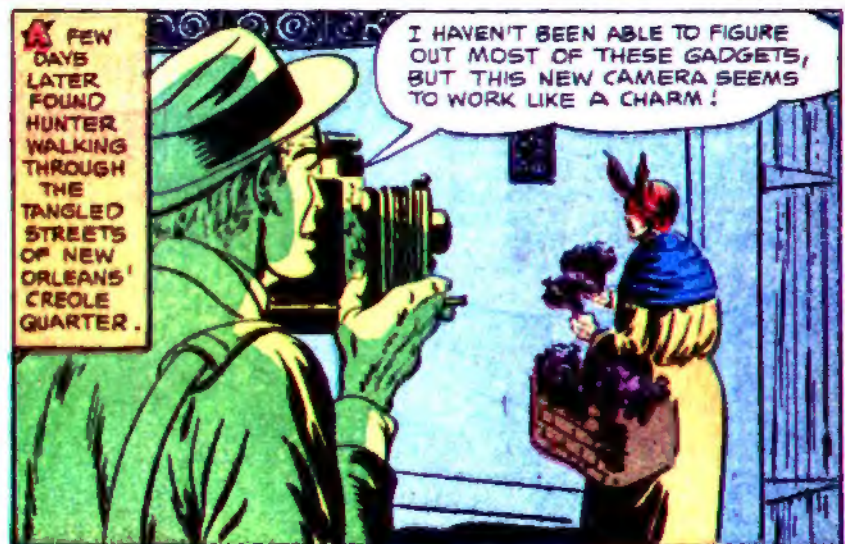
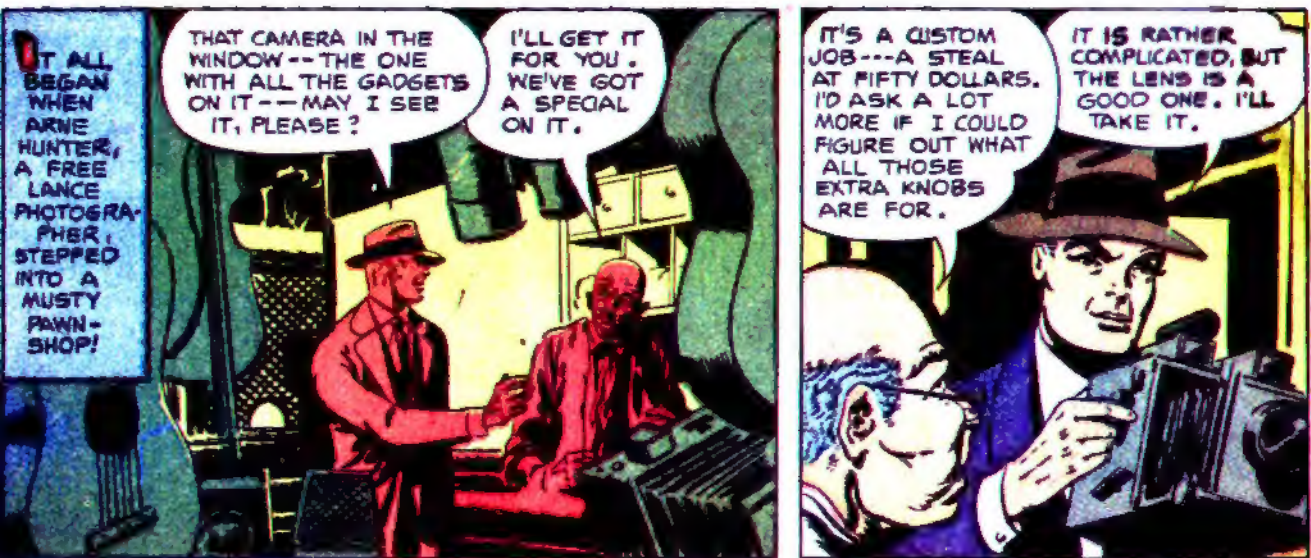
ON SALE AT YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND 10¢

The MAN who SAW too MUCH

THIS MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE HOLDS MANY DARK TRUTHS A MAN MAY NOT TRESPASS AGAINST LEST HE RELEASE UPON HIMSELF TERROR BEYOND COMPREHENSION. BUT ARNE HUNTER, IN A MOMENT OF FOOLISH DARING, LIFTED THE MOULDY VEIL THAT SHROUDED THE UNSEEN WORLD ---AND LEARNED TO HIS HORROR THE MERCILESS REVENGE THAT THE DEAD RESERVED FOR **THE MAN WHO SAW TOO MUCH!**

NO! DON'T TOUCH ME! I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY! I SWEAR IT!

REMORSE IS NOT ENOUGH. YOU HAVE PROBED THE SECRETS OF ANOTHER WORLD--- THE WORLD OF THE DAMNED--- AND NOW YOU MUST PAY WITH YOUR LIFE.



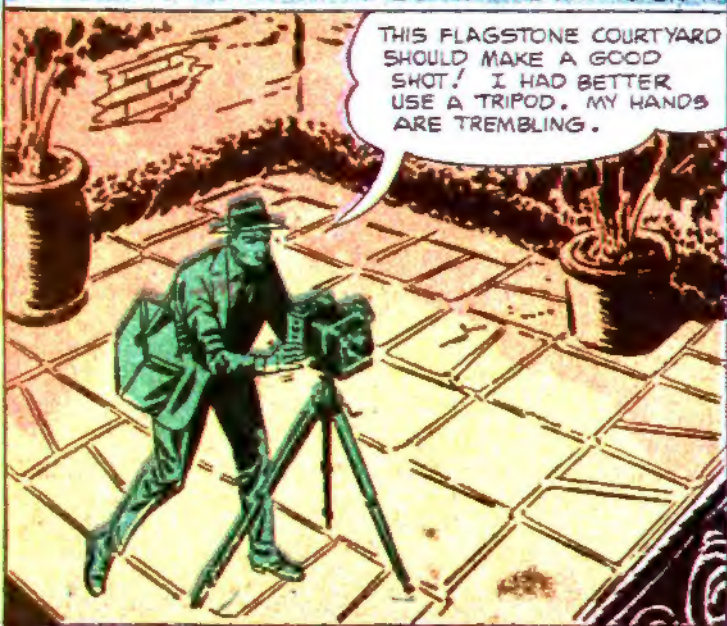


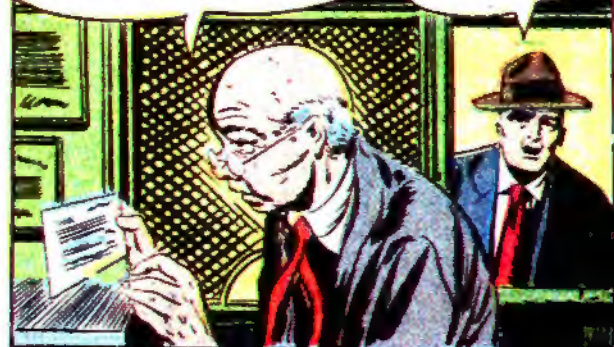
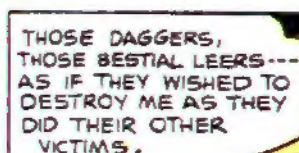
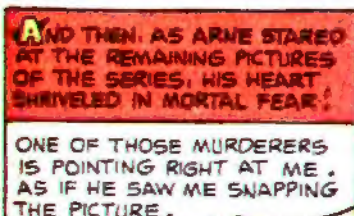


AND YET A CHILL PREMONITION TOLD ARNE HUNTER THAT BEHIND THIS GRIM INCIDENT WAS A REALITY EVEN MORE GHASTLY.



BUT COLD LOGIC COULD NOT EXPLAIN AWAY ARNE HUNTER'S FEARS, AND BY THE TIME HE HAD RETURNED TO NEW ORLEANS HIS NERVES WERE SCREAMING WITH TENSION.







NEW ORLEANS! IT'S TOO MUCH FOR MERE COINCIDENCE. I'VE GOT TO FIND THIS ANTON LAFITTE AND MAKE HIM EXPLAIN BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

ALL THAT DAY ARNE HUNTER LIVED IN DREAD FEAR OF THE MALEVOLENCE THAT WAS CLOSING IN ON HIM --- OF SIGHTLESS EYES SEARCHING --- COLD HANDS CLAWING AT HIM ACROSS THE DEAD YEARS. THAT NIGHT ON THE SOUTHBOUND TRAIN, IN THE DARK CORRIDORS OF HIS SLEEP-DRUGGED MIND, HE MET HIS GHOSTLY PURSUERS FACE TO FACE!



HERE HE IS---THE ONE WHO SPIED ON US! HE HAS TRIED TO UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE DEAD.



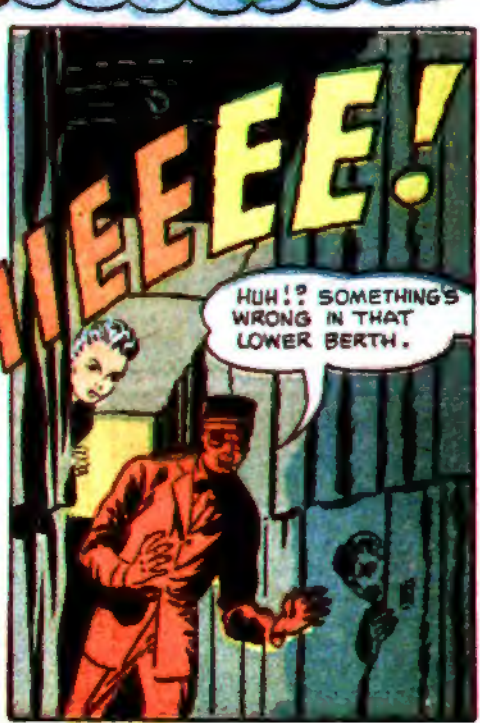
SLAY HIM! DESTROY HIM AS WE DID THE OTHERS!

NO! NO!



KILL! KILL!

AAA!



HEEE!

HUH!? SOMETHING'S WRONG IN THAT LOWER BERTH.



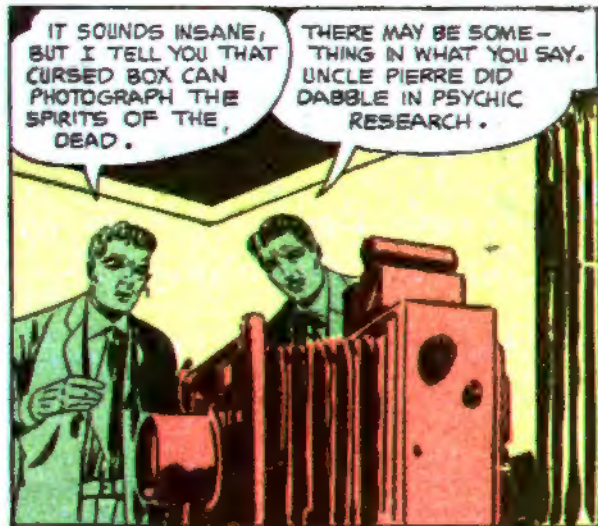
WHAT'S WRONG, MAN? WHAT HAPPENED?

IT'S THEM! THEY'RE AFTER ME. DON'T LET THEM GET ME.



EASY, MR. HUNTER. YOU'RE ON THE NEW ORLEANS SPECIAL. I GUESS YOU JUST HAD A BAD DREAM.

A DREAM! THANK HEAVEN! THEN IT WASN'T REAL!





IT WAS HIGH IN A MUSTY ROOM THAT THEY FOUND THE RECORDS --- BIZARE RECORDS THAT LED THEM BACK OVER TIMES' THRESH-OLD TO THE DAYS WHEN PIERRE LAFITTE WAS STILL ALIVE.

HERE, LISTEN TO THIS NOTE FROM HIS DIARY:
"DECEMBER TWENTY-FIRST--- TODAY AT LAST I APPROACH THE APEX OF MY TRIUMPH..."



It was simple. After all, a camera is built to capture the images of people as they live - of events as they occur.



But now, by adding a few simple refracting mirrors to the optical system, I have at last perfected a camera which can photograph events of the past and people long since dead and forgotten.



Now, for the first time I go out to draw aside the shroud of the past and capture the ghostly faces and memories of the old Creole Quarter.



May heaven protect me from the evil forces I have released... Last night I tested my camera at the site of the thirty-year-old unsolved murder of Joseph Mornay---



And tonight, when I de-veloped the pictures, I had the photographs of the long-dead murderers caught red-handed in the midst of their crime.



But one of my proofs shows that I was seen by the ghostly killers as I spied upon them.



And now I await the dread doom that I know must come. I have opened a forbidden door and seen that which mortal eyes must never see. And I know the dead will not rest until they are revenged.

THAT WAS THE LAST ENTRY. IT WAS THE VERY NEXT NIGHT THAT MY UNCLE WAS MURDERED!

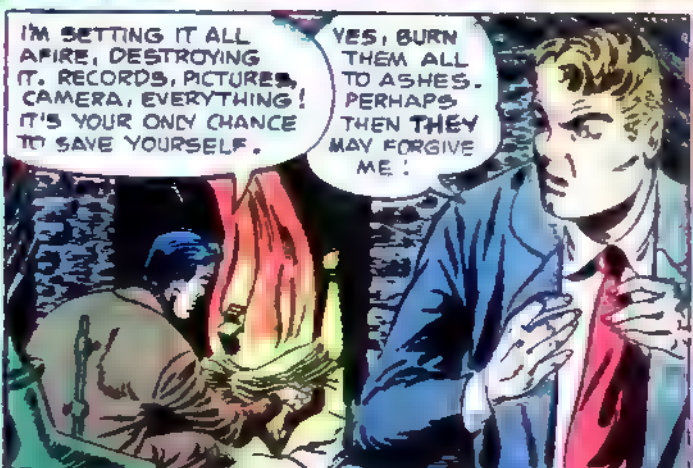


MURDERED BY THE DEAD BECAUSE HE HAD UNCOVERED THEIR SECRETS!



AND I'M NEXT! I'M NEXT! THEY'LL KILL ME, TEAR THE LIVING SOUL FROM MY BODY AS THEY DID TO YOUR UNCLE.

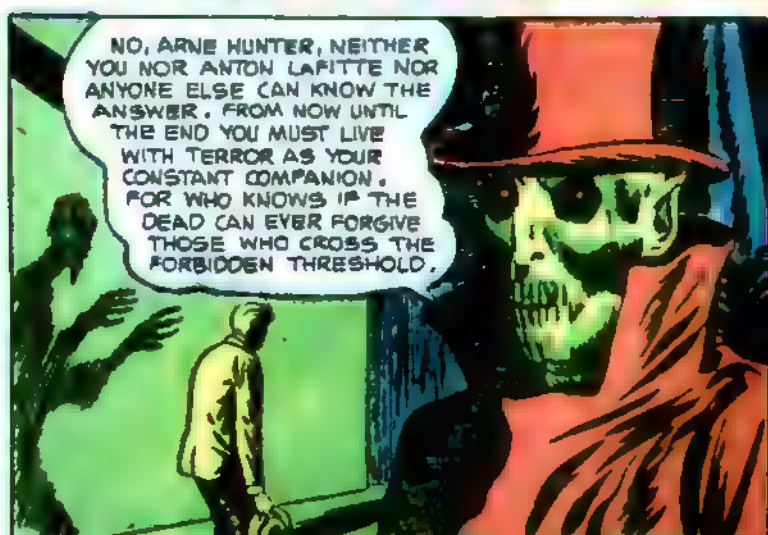
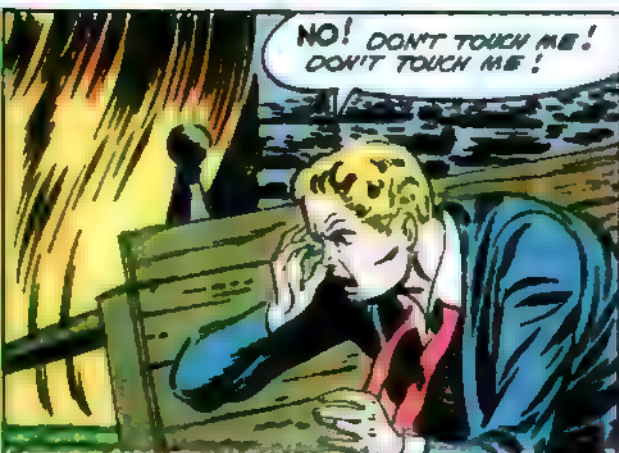
THERE'S JUST ONE CHANCE, HUNTER. QUICK, HELP ME WITH THESE RECORDS AND THAT CURSED CAMERA. TAKE THEM OVER TO THE FIREPLACE.



I'M SETTING IT ALL AFIRE, DESTROYING IT. RECORDS, PICTURES, CAMERA, EVERYTHING! IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE TO SAVE YOURSELF.

YES, BURN THEM ALL TO ASHES. PERHAPS THEN THEY MAY FORGIVE ME!

AND AS THE FIRE TOOK HOLD, THE FLAMES SHOT UPWARD WITH A SINISTER HISSING ROAR.



DEATH HAS MANY FACES AND DWELLS IN MANY PLACES, BUT FEW SO REGULARLY AS WHERE FIERCE BULL AND BRAVE TOREADOR MEET IN DAILY COMBAT IN THE GREAT BULLFIGHTING ARENAS. YES, THERE DEATH IS EVER-PRESENT, EVER-WAITING TO CLAIM ITS PRIZE FOR THERE IS NO GREATER TOREADOR THAN THE SUPREME AND FATAL ... **TOREADOR OF DEATH!**



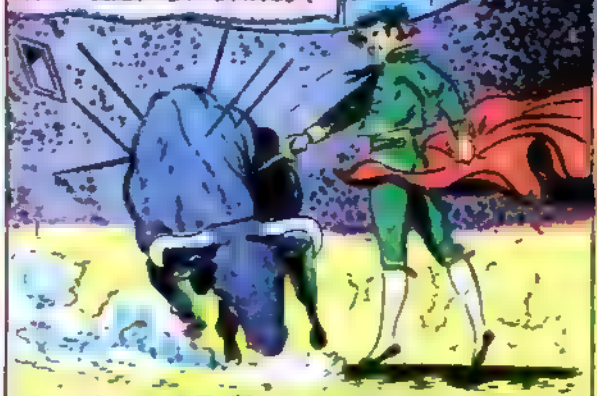
THE BLOOD-RED SUN BATHED THE GREAT ARENA OF VALENZA AS LUIS SAN CORSE, GREATEST TOREADOR OF ALL, FACED THE CHARGE OF EL TORO--THE BULL! THEN SUDDEN SHOUTS OF FEAR FILLED THE AIR!

HIS ANKLE!...HE HAS TURNED HIS ANKLE! HE IS OFF-BALANCE!

EET IS THEE HEEL OF HEE'S BOOT! EET HAS BROKEN OFF! HE WEE! BE KILLED!



BUT BELOW IN THE RING, WHERE THUNDERING DEATH COMES AT A SECOND'S MISSTEP, THE TOREADOR COOLY REGAINED HIS BALANCE DESPITE THE ACCIDENT AND, WITH CALM SKILL OF TRUE COURAGE ADMINISTERED THE COUP DE GRACE!



AND NOW THE ARENA RANG WITH CHEERS! 'BRAVO!' THEY ECHOED. 'EXCELLENTE! MAGNIFICO!' YES, PLAUDITS FIT FOR ONLY THE GREAT. BUT AT THE SIDE OF THE ARENA, ANOTHER WATCHED, A YOUNG TOREADOR.

FAILED AGAIN, AND I WAS SO CERTAIN THAT WEAKENING THE BOOT HEEL WOULD THROW HIM OFF-BALANCE! EL TORO WOULD DO THE REST!



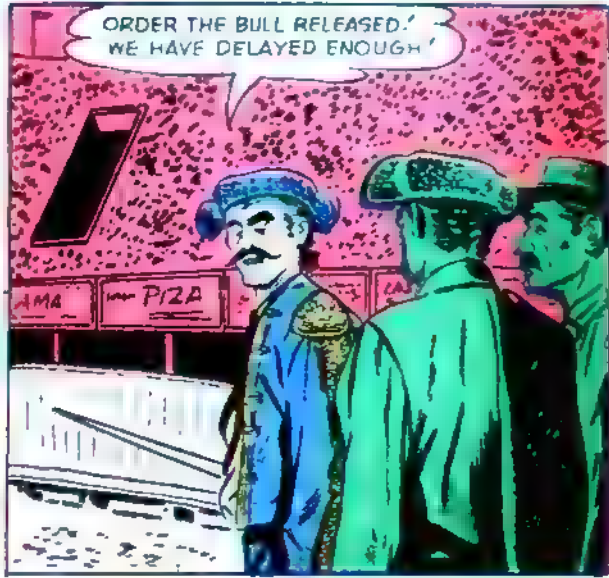
NOW LUIS WILL BE A STILL GREATER HERO WHILE I, MANUEL SABATA, AM TOSSED THE CRUMBS OF APPLAUSE ONLY! I MUST FIND ANOTHER WAY TO GET RID OF HIM! I MUST!



MANUEL SABATA'S THOUGHTS WERE SUDDENLY INTERRUPTED AS HE HEARD HIS NAME BEING CALLED. ONE OF THE PICADORS BECKONED IMPERATIVELY TO HIM. HE MOVED FORWARD TO THE OPEN ARENA.

MANUEL! MANUEL! YOU ARE ON NEXT! EVERYTHING IS READY! THE PEOPLE WAIT! COME...

EH...? YES, YES... I COME!



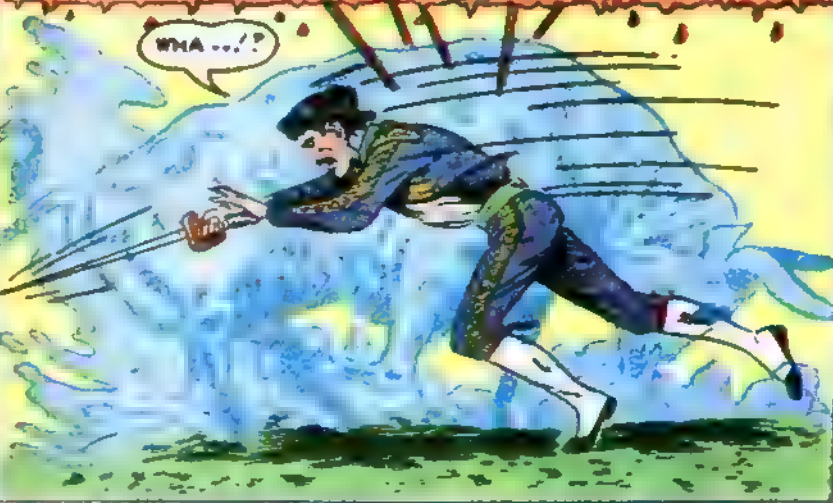
ORDER THE BULL RELEASED! WE HAVE DELAYED ENOUGH!

MANUEL HAD A SNEER AT THE POLITE APPLAUSE OF THE AFICIONADOS AND THEN TURNED AWAY. BUT THE SNEER BECAME A MASK OF HORROR AS HE SAW THE BULL CHARGING, ALMOST UPON HIM. IT WAS A CREATURE TO MAKE THE BLOOD RUN COLD!

DIABLE!



MANUEL STABBED PERFECTLY AT THE THING OF A MOMENT, PUTTING ALL HIS STRENGTH BEHIND THE THRUST. BUT THE STRANGE APPARITION SUDDENLY EVAPORATED AND HE FELT HIMSELF FALL FORWARD... FORWARD...



W-WHAT HAPPENED? I-I DID NOT MISS HIM! I COULDN'T HAVE!



SHAKEN, MANUEL SUDDENLY HEARD THE JEERS AND LAUGHTER FROM THE STANDS, THOUSANDS OF VOICES CALLING HIS NAME IN DERISION AS HE STRUGGLED TO HIS FEET!



MANUEL, WHAT DID YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING? WE HAVE NOT EVEN RELEASED THE BULL YET!

YOU-YOU HAVE NOT RELEASED HIM? I... IT WAS NOTHING! I GREW DIZZY, THAT'S ALL!



I-I AM ILL! I CANNOT FIGHT THE BULL TODAY! I-I GO NOW! I AM ILL!



WITH THE JEERS RINGING IN HIS EARS, MANUEL SABATA SLIPPED OUT THE BACK DOOR OF THE ARENA. MINUTES LATER HE BROODED ANGRILY IN A CORNER OF A TAVERN, HIS SOUL AFLAME WITH THE FIRES OF EVIL AND WRATH!

A BAD DAY IT HAS BEEN! WITH MY OWN HANDS I FIXED THE HEEL OF THE BOOT TO BREAK! I CALLED ON DEATH TO STRIKE LUIS SAN CORESE, AND AGAIN DEATH REFUSED ME!



WHY... WHY? AND THE VISION... THAT APPARITION I SAW IN THE RING! WHAT OF THAT? DEATH TAUNTS ME... MOCKS MY PLANS!



BUT MANUEL'S THOUGHTS WERE NOT HIS ALONE! A VOICE SPOKE AT HIS ELBOW AND HE TURNED TO SEE A STRANGE FIGURE, LOOKING AT FIRST LIKE A CREATURE FROM SOME OTHER WORLD, WEARING THE CAPE AND BATTERED HAT OF AN OLD TOREADOR!



YOU CURSE YOUR FATE, EH? YOU WANT TO BE THE GREAT ONE, BUT LUIS SAN CORESE OVERSHADOWS YOU YET, EH?

WHA...?

HOW DO YOU Y-YOU CLAIM TO KNOW MY THOUGHTS? WHO ARE YOU?

AH--I, TOO, ONCE HAD SUCH DREAMS OF GREATNESS! I AM AN OLD TOREADOR! THESE BANDAGES I HAVE WORN EVER SINCE MY LAST BATTLE WITH EL TORO!



DEATH WAS NEAR FOR LUIS SAN CORESE TODAY! NEAR-- BUT NOT YET READY! YOU SEE, DEATH WANTS TO BE COAXED MORE! THOSE WHO WOULD CALL DEATH MUST STILL CALL AGAIN!

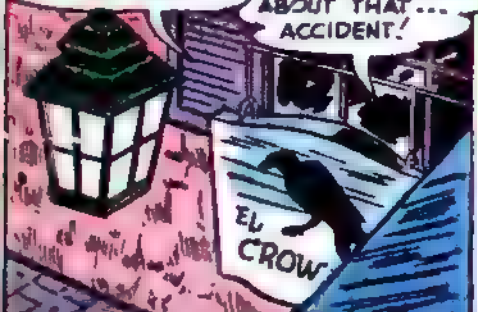


I ONCE SAW DEATH COME TO A TOREADOR IN AN ACCIDENT, AS IT ALMOST DID TO LUIS TODAY! YES, AN ACCIDENT THAT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE! HIS SWORD BROKE AGAINST THE BULL!



SUDDENLY A STRANGE CHILL PASSED OVER MANUEL AND HE SHIVERED, BUT THE OLD TOREADOR'S WORDS HELD HIM SPELLBOUND! ONLY THE MAN'S EYES COULD BE SEEN GLITTERING THROUGH THE BANDAGES WITH AN INTENSE COMMANDING LIGHT!

YES, HIS SWORD BROKE AND EL TORO KILLED HIM INSTANTLY! MORE! TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THAT... ACCIDENT!



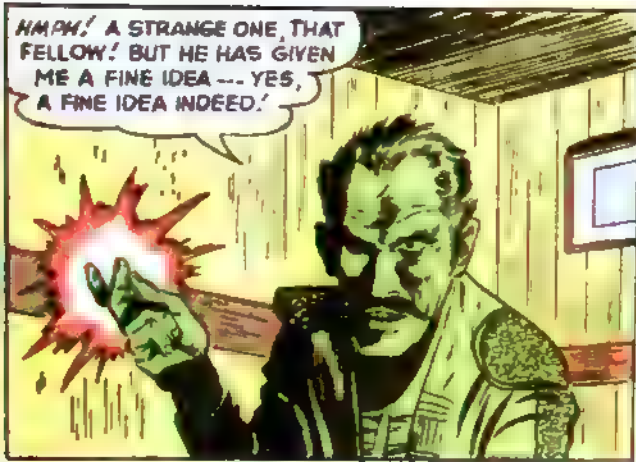
WAITER... WAITER! WINE HERE, FOR MY FRIEND-- PRONTO!



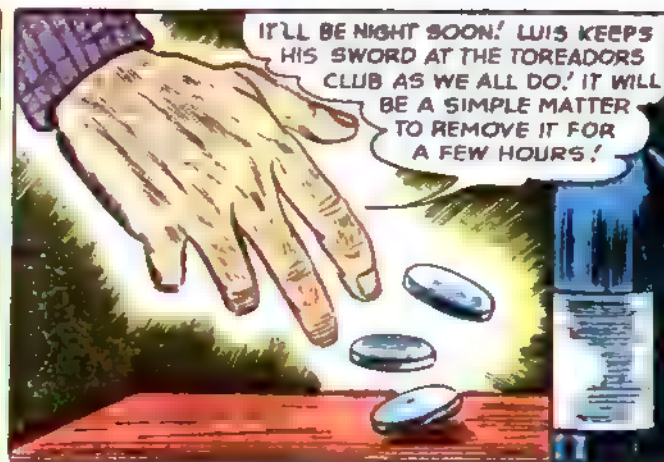
BUT WHEN MANUEL TURNED BACK TO HIS STRANGE COMPANION--

NOW WE CAN TALK BETT...! HE-- HE IS GONE!

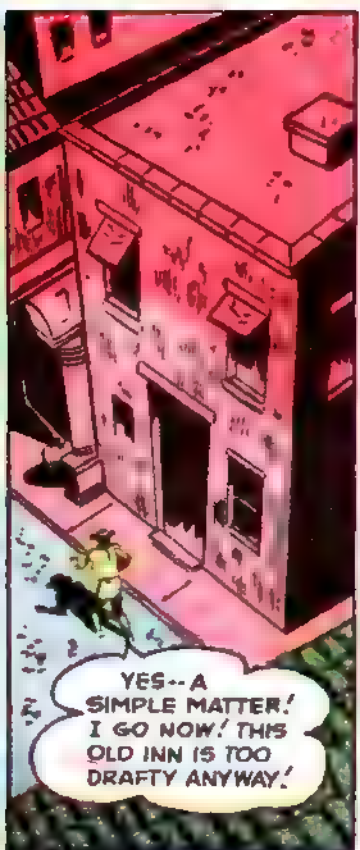




HMPH! A STRANGE ONE, THAT FELLOW! BUT HE HAS GIVEN ME A FINE IDEA --- YES, A FINE IDEA INDEED!



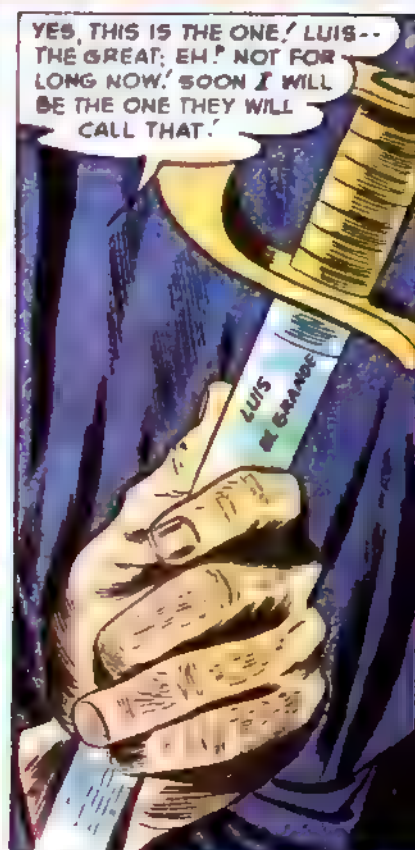
IT'LL BE NIGHT SOON! LUIS KEEPS HIS SWORD AT THE TOREADORS CLUB AS WE ALL DO! IT WILL BE A SIMPLE MATTER TO REMOVE IT FOR A FEW HOURS!



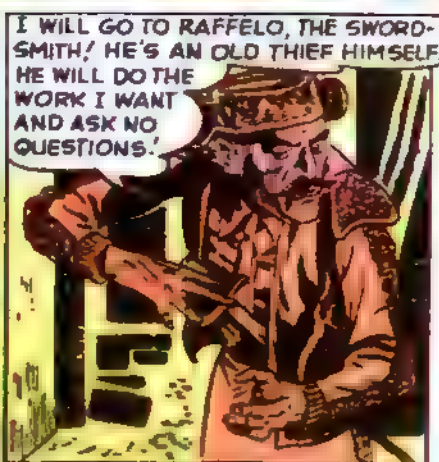
YES-- A SIMPLE MATTER! I GO NOW! THIS OLD INN IS TOO DRAFTY ANYWAY!



AH.. HERE IT IS! THE ONE HE ALWAYS USES, A GIFT FROM HIS FOLLOWERS!

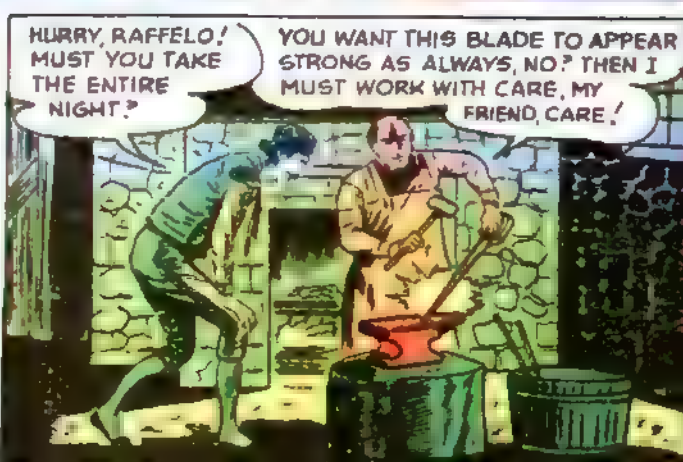


YES, THIS IS THE ONE! LUIS-- THE GREAT; EH? NOT FOR LONG NOW! SOON I WILL BE THE ONE THEY WILL CALL THAT!



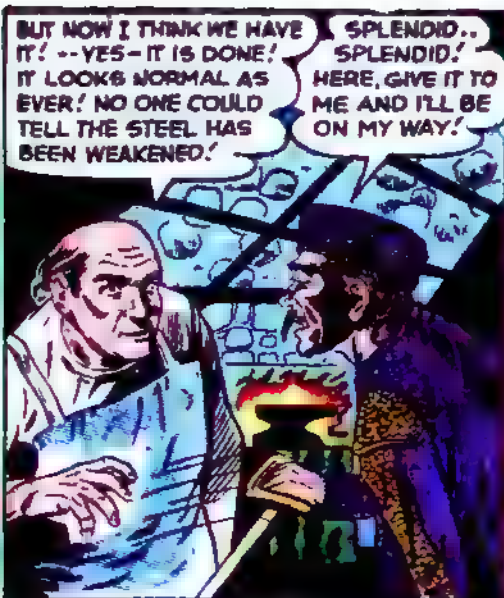
I WILL GO TO RAFFELO, THE SWORD-SMITH! HE'S AN OLD THIEF HIMSELF! HE WILL DO THE WORK I WANT AND ASK NO QUESTIONS!

AND SOON AFTER, THE FIRELIGHT OF A FORGE FLICKERED TO LIGHT A DARK AND DANK LITTLE SHOP WITH THE GLARE OF THE DEVIL'S OWN WORKSHOP!



HURRY, RAFFELO! MUST YOU TAKE THE ENTIRE NIGHT?

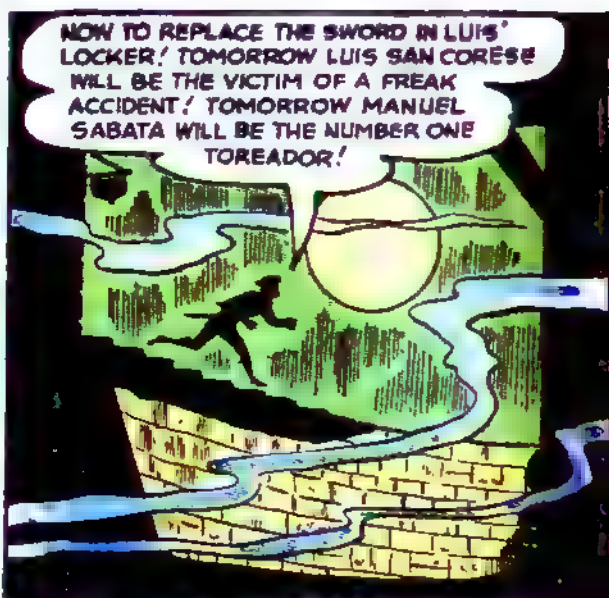
YOU WANT THIS BLADE TO APPEAR STRONG AS ALWAYS, NO? THEN I MUST WORK WITH CARE, MY FRIEND, CARE!



BUT NOW I THINK WE HAVE IT! --YES-- IT IS DONE! IT LOOKS NORMAL AS EVER! NO ONE COULD TELL THE STEEL HAS BEEN WEAKENED!

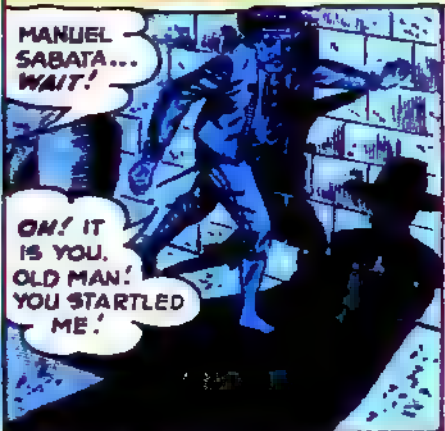
SPLENDID.. SPLENDID! HERE, GIVE IT TO ME AND I'LL BE ON MY WAY!

MOMENTS LATER, THE SWORD HIDDEN BENEATH HIS COAT, MANUEL HURRIED INTO THE NIGHT STREETS! ALREADY THE SHUTTERS OF THE HOUSES WERE DRAWN AND THE MOON ROSE HIGH!



NOW TO REPLACE THE SWORD IN LUIS' LOCKER! TOMORROW LUIS SAN CORESE WILL BE THE VICTIM OF A FREAK ACCIDENT! TOMORROW MANUEL SABATA WILL BE THE NUMBER ONE TOREADOR!

SUDDENLY A FIGURE STEPPED FROM THE DEEP SHADOWS AND MANUEL STARTED BACK IN FRIGHT. THE FIGURE SPOKE AND MANUEL DARED TO BREATHE AGAIN AS HE SAW THE WHITE OF THE BANDAGES IN THE MOONLIGHT!



MANUEL SABATA... WAIT!

OH! IT IS YOU, OLD MAN! YOU STARTLED ME!

YOU PLOT DEATH, MANUEL SABATA! YES... YOU PLOT DEATH!

WHA...??! YOU-- YOU SAY STRONG WORDS, OLD MAN!

YES, BUT I KNOW!... I KNOW! YET YOU FORGET SOMETHING, MANUEL SABATA! THE DEATH OF LUIS SAN CORESE WILL NOT MAKE YOU A GREAT TOREADOR UNLESS YOU LEARN THE THINGS HE KNOWS, THE TRICKS OF THE GREAT TOREADORS!



I CAN TEACH YOU THOSE TRICKS! MEET ME AT THE ARENA WHEN THE HOUR IS MIDNIGHT! I WILL TEACH YOU TO BE THE GREATEST OF THEM ALL!

MIDNIGHT! BUT THERE WILL NOT EVEN BE A BULL TO PRACTISE ON AT THAT HOUR!

BUT THE EYES GLITTERED THROUGH THE BANDAGES TO HOLD MANUEL IN A GRIP OF EVIL FASCINATION. THE STRANGE OLD FELLOW HAD ONCE BEFORE SPOKEN WORDS OF HELP! PERHAPS HE HAD MORE TO TEACH!

I PROMISE YOU WILL LEARN THINGS NO OTHER TOREADOR HAS EVER KNOWN OR SEEN! BE AT THE ARENA AT MIDNIGHT! LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME-- EVERYTHING!

MIDNIGHT! ALL RIGHT-- I WILL BE THERE!



RETURNING HIS RIVAL'S SWORD TO ITS PROPER PLACE, MANUEL CHANGED INTO HIS TOREADOR'S COSTUME AND AT MIDNIGHT HE APPROACHED THE EMPTY ARENA STANDING STARKLY IN THE OF THE SILENT MOON.

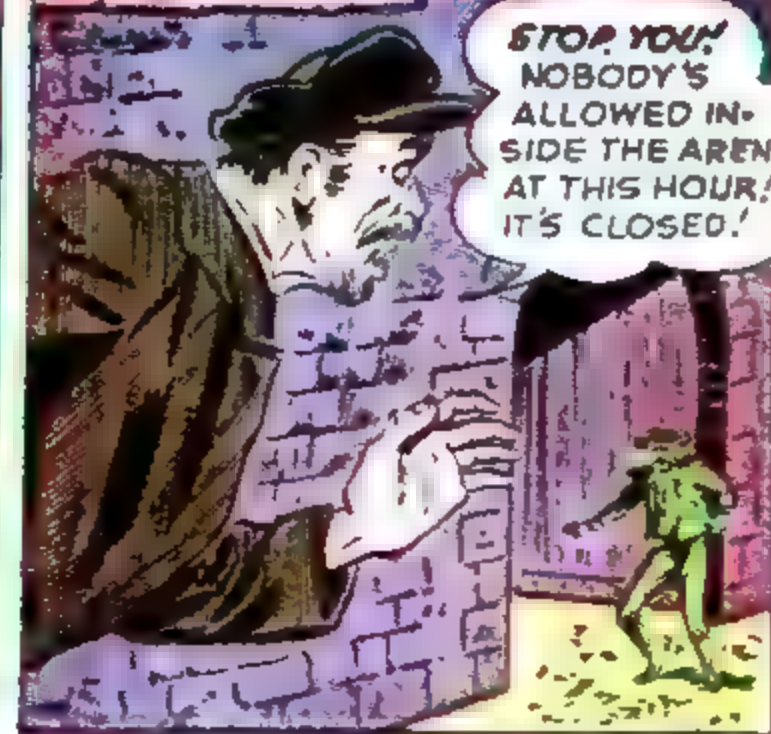


IN HERE, MANUEL SABATA...
..INSIDE! I AM
WAITING
FOR YOU!



YES...
I
COME!

BUT SUDDENLY ANOTHER VOICE CALLED
OUT AND A FIGURE CAME RUNNING
TOWARD HIM. IT WAS THE
NIGHT WATCHMAN!



STOP YOU!
NOBODY'S
ALLOWED IN-
SIDE THE ARENA
AT THIS HOUR!
IT'S CLOSED!

BUT I MUST GO IN! I AM EXPECTED! I AM
GOING TO PRACTISE!

NO, SEÑOR! THERE
IS NOTHING IN
THE ARENA NOW!
GO HOME AND
SLEEP! YOU
HAVE HAD TOO
MUCH TIPO!



OUT OF MY WAY, FOOL! YOU ARE
NOT STOPPING ME
WHEN I'VE A CHANCE
TO LEARN THE THINGS
TO MAKE ME A GREAT
TOREADOR!

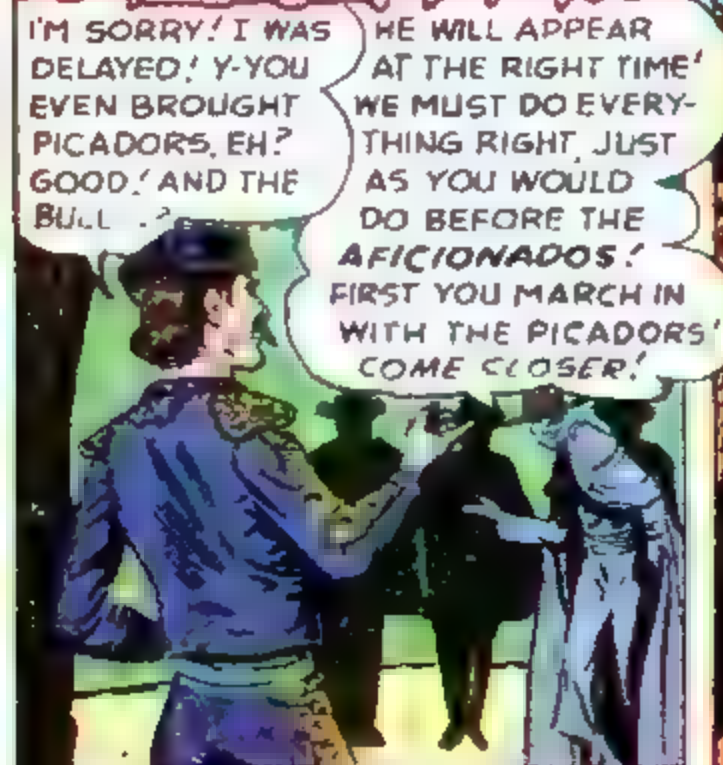


WHAM!

THE WATCHMAN FELL UNCONSCIOUS,
AND MANUEL RACED INTO
THE ARENA.

I'M SORRY! I WAS
DELAYED! Y-YOU
EVEN BROUGHT
PICADORS, EH?
GOOD! AND THE
BULL...

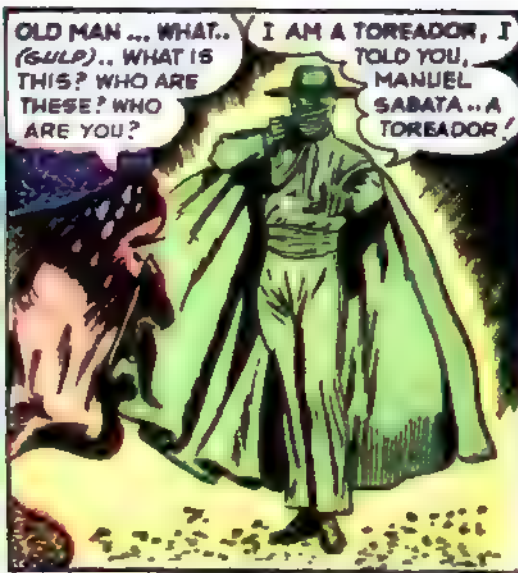
HE WILL APPEAR
AT THE RIGHT TIME!
WE MUST DO EVERY-
THING RIGHT, JUST
AS YOU WOULD
DO BEFORE THE
AFICIONADOS!
FIRST YOU MARCH IN
WITH THE PICADORS!
COME CLOSER!



MANUEL MOVED NEARER THE PICADORS WHEN SUDDENLY THEY
LOWERED THEIR CAPES, AND HIS VERY BREATH FROZE IN HIS THROAT.
A SIGHT TO TURN STONE TO WATER MET HIS HORRIFIED EYES.

WH... WHA...?!
DIABLE!





OLD MAN ... WHAT.. (GULP)... WHAT IS THIS? WHO ARE THESE? WHO ARE YOU?

I AM A TOREADOR, I TOLD YOU, MANUEL SABATA...A TOREADOR!

THEN WITH A SWIRL OF HIS HAND, THE FIGURE CAST OFF THE LAST OF HIS BANDAGES! MANUEL SABATA COULD ONLY STAND IN FROZEN SHOCK, HIS BLOOD CRAWLING IN AWE-STRUCK FRIGHT!



YES!... I AM THE TOREADOR OF DEATH!



N-NO...! THIS...THIS CANNOT BE! IT IS A DREAM... A BAD DREAM!



I-I AM GETTING OUT OF HERE!

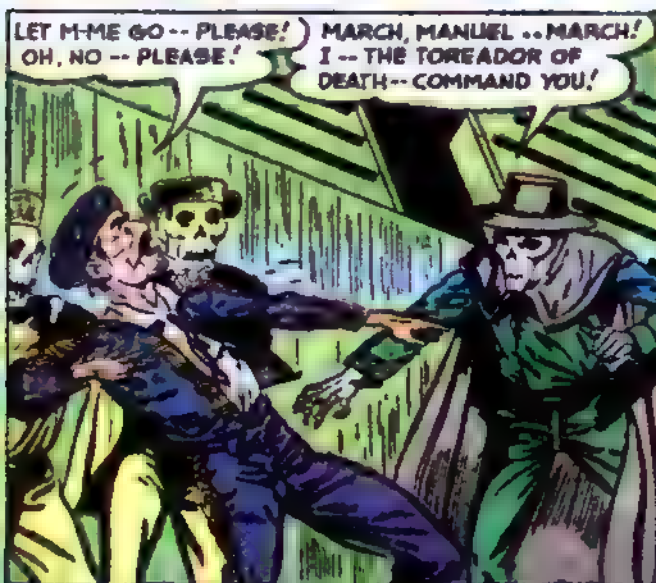
NO, MANUEL SABATA! YOU ARE HERE TO STAY... FOREVER!

MANUEL HAD STUMBLERD HARDLY A STEP WHEN ICY FINGERS GRIPPED HIS ARMS! FLESHLESS HANDS NO MORTAL GRIP COULD BREAK DRAGGED HIM BACKWARDS. HELPLESS WITH FEAR, EVEN HIS SCREAMS DIED IN HIS PARALYZED THROAT!

COME, MANUEL, WE MUST MARCH TO THE CENTER OF THE ARENA AS IS THE CUSTOM BEFORE YOU FIGHT THE BULL!



NO--NO--OOOH!



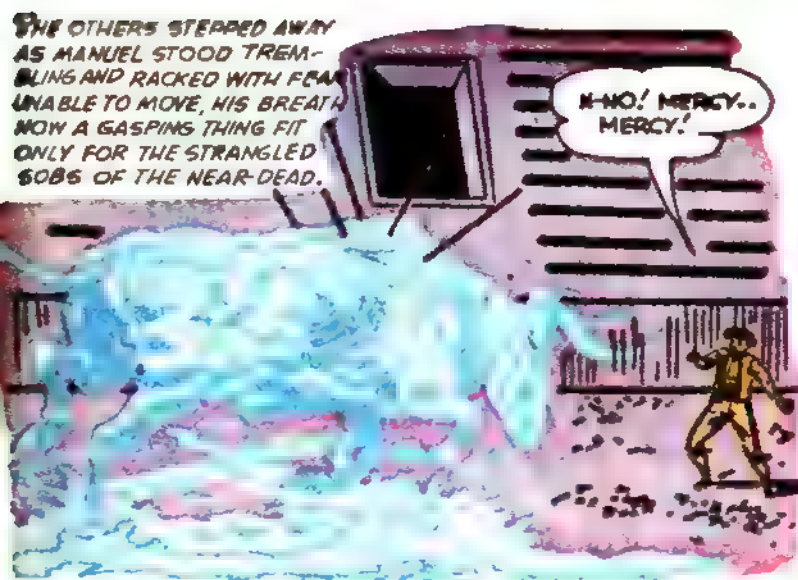
LET M-ME GO-- PLEASE! OH, NO-- PLEASE!

MARCH, MANUEL..MARCH! I-- THE TOREADOR OF DEATH-- COMMAND YOU!

IN THE SLOW CADENCE OF DEATH, THE GHOULISH PROCESSION MARCHED. THEN MANUEL SAW IT--THE TERRIBLE CREATURE HE HAD SEEN ONCE BEFORE! ONCE AGAIN IT CHARGED AT HIM IN AWESOME FURY!

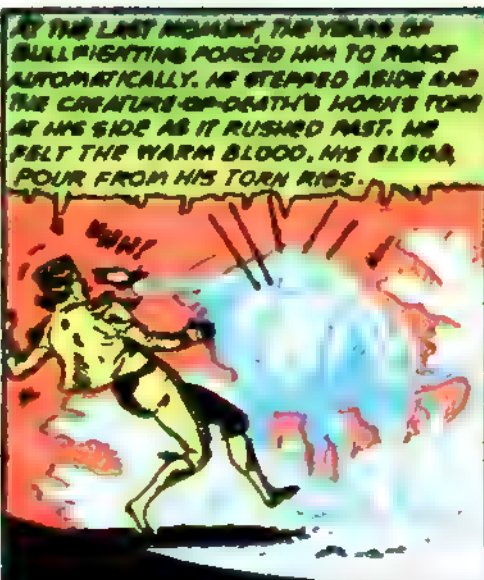


THE OTHERS STEPPED AWAY AS MANUEL STOOD TREMBLING AND RACKED WITH FEAR, UNABLE TO MOVE, HIS BREATH NOW A GASPING THING FIT ONLY FOR THE STRANGLED SOBS OF THE NEAR-DEAD.



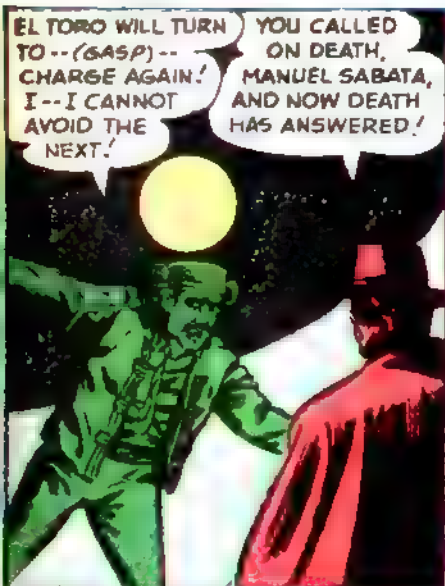
NO! MERCY.. MERCY!

AT THE LAST MOMENT, THE YEARS OF BULLFIGHTING FORCED HIM TO REACT AUTOMATICALLY. HE STEPPED ASIDE AND THE CREATURE OF DEATH'S HORNS TORE AT HIS SIDE AS IT RUSHED PAST. HE FELT THE WARM BLOOD, HIS BLOOD POUR FROM HIS TORN RIBS.



EL TORO WILL TURN TO -- (GASP) -- CHARGE AGAIN! I -- I CANNOT AVOID THE NEXT!

YOU CALLED ON DEATH, MANUEL SABATA, AND NOW DEATH HAS ANSWERED!



GIVE ME A SWORD -- (SOS) -- A SWORD, I PRAY YOU! GIVE ME A CHANCE FOR MY LIFE.. A SWORD... (SOS)!



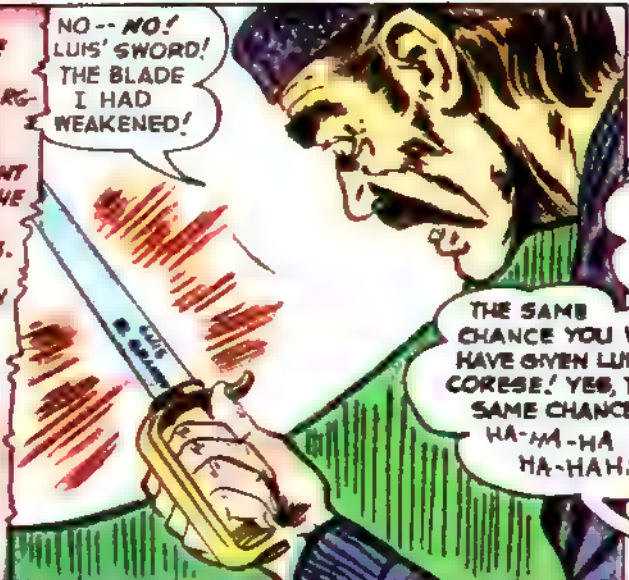
ALL RIGHT, YOU SHALL HAVE A SWORD!

YES -- YES, GIVE IT HERE -- GIVE IT TO ME!.. QUICKLY!



TURNING TO FACE THE BULL, ALREADY CHARGING AGAIN, MANUEL'S GLANCE WENT DOWN TO THE SWORD IN HIS HANDS. THE INSCRIPTION ON THE BLADE STRUCK HIS EYES AS A GLIMPSE INTO THE BOOK OF DOOM!

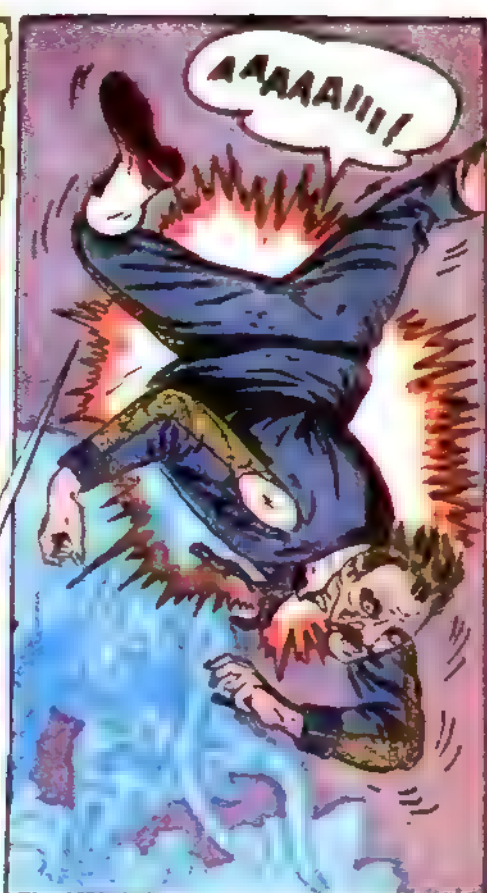
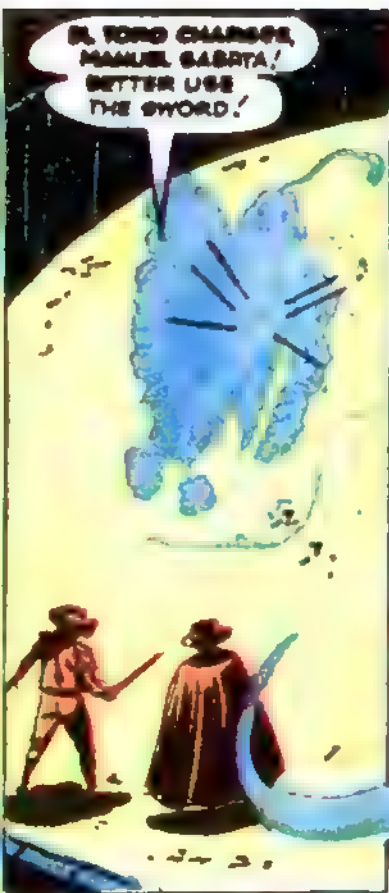
NO -- NO! LUIS' SWORD! THE BLADE I HAD WEAKENED!



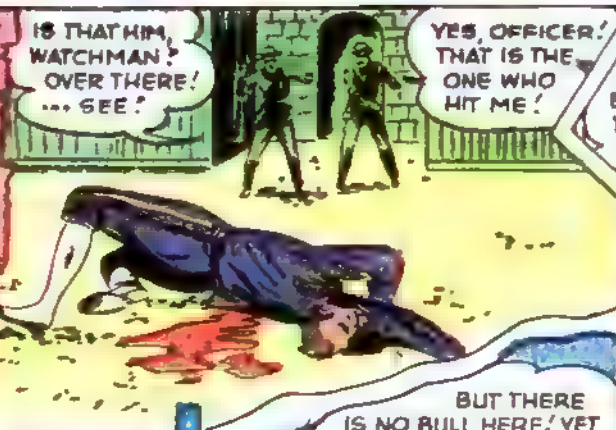
THE SAME CHANCE YOU WOULD HAVE GIVEN LUIS SAN CORESE! YES, THE SAME CHANCE -- HA-HA-HA HA-HAH!



BUT THIS BLADE WILL BREAK! I-I HAVE NO CHANCE WITH THIS!



MANUEL SABATA'S BODY LANDED IN A GROTESQUE HEAP AND SUDDENLY THE LIFELESS FORM WAS ALONE IN THE ARENA WITH ONLY THE PALE MOON A SILENT WITNESS. IN A FEW MOMENTS, FOOTSTEPS CLATTERED AND...



YES, THERE IS MUCH BEYOND THE UNDERSTANDING OF MORTAL MAN, BUT THE EVER-PRESENT, EVER-WATCHFUL EYES OF ANOTHER WORLD UNDERSTAND THAT TO CALL ON DEATH IS TO SIGN ONE'S OWN NAME IN THE LEDGER OF THE LIFELESS!



CURSE OF THE SEAL MEN

By Richard Krome

SLOWLY, cautiously, the powerful motor launch nosed its way through the scattered ice floes that littered the steel-gray waters of the Arctic borderland. Suddenly, at the bow, Pierre Manet thrust up a thick-mittened hand, in urgent command.

"Stop!" he commanded hoarsely. "Throttle down, Carson. I think there's a herd up ahead—past that big 'berg! I can hear them talking to each other . . ."

Jim Carson, at the helm, grunted viciously, ". . . and they'll soon hear the bark of *this*!" He loosened a heavy automatic Winchester that was slung around his shoulder. More quietly now, the motor launch crept ahead, waves slapping against its side. Then, as it passed a giant iceberg that rose above the smaller floes like an oak above scrub pine, the two white hunters saw their prey ahead—a herd of Arctic seals, swimming in the cold water and disporting themselves on a wide, shallow floe. They'd been searching for days for this herd . . . and now they had it! Both Carson and Pierre Manet hunched forward, rifles ready, as the launch drifted toward the herd.

"Now!" husked big Carson. "Blast 'em!"

Both men sighted and fired, the accurate lead of their powerful Winchesters slashing toward the helpless herd! Two seals were cut down on the floe itself, before they could dive into the ocean. Then Pierre Manet and Jim Carson directed their deadly fire toward the animals that were attempting to swim away. Each time a sleek, brown water creature lifted its whisker-fringed nose above the sea surface, they fired instantly at it! Some of the seals were killed—others merely wounded. Their eddying blood began to dye the water a crimson hue!

Suddenly, as the slaughter continued, Manet and Carson were surprised to see a parka-clad Eskimo paddling rapidly toward them in a

kayak, from behind the big iceberg they had passed earlier.

His swarthy face suffused with anger, the Eskimo approached the side of their launch. Now he began to shake a wide-bladed spear, shouting vehemently, "Stop! Stop! You must not kill seals! You kill them just for skins, and throw carcass away! My people need them for skin, meat, blubber—all parts! My people will starve, if you keep this up!"

"Bah! Clear off in that blamed kayak!" Jim Carson shouted impatiently at the Eskimo who was now alongside. "Keep clear—or you're liable to get hit yourself!"

But the fury of the Northman was redoubled. Brandishing his spear, he began to clamber onto the deck of the launch.

"You not stop—I *make* you stop," he threatened, crouching and drawing the spear back.

Carson lifted his Winchester. "All right, Mister! You asked for this," he grunted. Pierre Manet clutched at his arm, trying to stop him, but the big seal hunter pulled the trigger once—twice! Clutching at his chest, the Eskimo fell forward. Blood bubbled at his lips and sprayed from his fur-enclosed chest, splattering on the leggings of Pierre Manet who was closest to him. His eyes beginning to glaze, the Eskimo shook a trembling fist at the white men.

"Devils! Devils you are," he whispered. "And devils you will die! I—I wish the curse . . ." He began to cough in a tremendous spasm, his lifeblood now covering Manet's leggings. ". . . I wish the curse of Akimiah on you . . ."

With these final half-heard words, he lurched backward, tumbling from the deck of the motor launch and disappearing from sight in the Arctic depths! With his words, the skies suddenly blackened, and it was as if the grip of a mighty hand encompassed the surface of the sea and began to congeal

It is a remorseless spell. Pierre Manet stared, hypnotized, at the blood on his leggings, his jaw hanging slack, his eyes bulging . . .

"What's the matter with you?" Jim Carson grunted. "I had to teach the interfering fool a lesson, didn't I? Now let's get to picking up these seal carcasses before we lose them all!" He looked worriedly up at the leaden skies. "Or before we get frozen in here for good! Looks as if the thermometer dropped thirty degrees right there!"

But Pierre did not move. He stared at the blood on the deck and on his leggings, and he muttered monotonously, "The curse of Akimah! The curse . . . of Akimah . . ."

"So what!" laughed Carson contemptuously! "I was the one who shot him! If the fool could whistle up any curse at all—it'd hit me!"

Pierre Manet shook his head hopelessly.

"You don't understand," he said. "His blood touched me—and the curse will afflict me! I—I'm turning into . . . into . . ."

"Into *what*?" Carson asked impatiently.

Then, even as Jim Carson watched incredulously, he realized what was happening! Pierre Manet's shape was changing—he was growing shorter and more squat! His hair, instead of black and curly, was turning brown and straight, and it grew swiftly, in a short, glossy length, over his body! Soon it covered his face and hands, until he was everywhere furred! And then, as Carson gasped in horror at what was happening before his very eyes, Manet's face changed. It was long and pointed, with a black-muzzled nose, and with fringed whiskers on each side. His eyes were dark and cunning! And his arms—were flippers! Barking excitedly, the seal that was Manet sprang up and down on the deck as Jim Carson, terrified, backed away . . .

"The curse . . . of Akimah," he muttered. "It hit *him*, not *me*, because he was touched by the Eskimo's blood!"

Suddenly the seal hunter flung back his head and howled with maniacal laughter. His

eyes crinkled with cleverness and happy triumph.

"Then it'll all be mine," he shouted. "The pelts we've taken so far—and those we shot today. I won't have to split with any partner. In fact, Manet, to me you're just another pelt!" Snatching up his Winchester, Carson fired point blank at the seal that squatted before him on the motor launch. A single shiver, and the animal lay before him, stilled forever.

Carson laughed again, the sound echoing mournfully over the Arctic waters, passing from floe to floe.

"And I'll start by taking *your* pelt, Pierre," he chuckled, drawing his sharp skinning knife.

Kneeling by the side of the dead seal, he plunged the keen-edged blade into the glossy side of the animal. As he did so, and as the still warm blood gushed out over his hand, Carson was shaken by a spasm of fear! At once, as in a dream, he recalled that he had once heard a 'breed tell of the curse of Akimah, many years before. "It's passed on, from victim to victim," the old trapper had said. "First one is killed, and then another. Whoever the blood touches—he turns into a . . ."

Springing backward in a frenzy of despair, Jim Carson tried desperately to wipe the fatal blood from his hands on his furry outer-garments.

BUT even as he stared down at his hands, he saw that the fingers were disappearing, and that the wrists, and the back of his hands were being covered with fine, soft hair! Frantically, he touched his head. It was different! It was longer, pointed . . . seal-like! He had hands and fingers no longer—but a seal's short, stumplike flippers!

And somehow, Jim Carson realized that it should be so.

Barking excitedly, he wriggled toward the edge of the launch. He slid off the boat into the freezing water. It was his home . . .

THE END

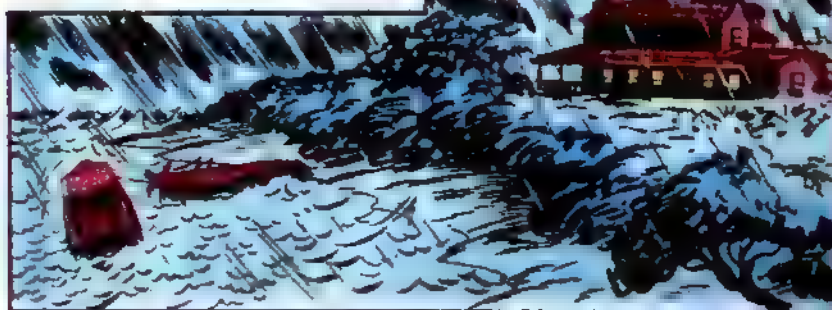
WHAT IS REAL—AND WHAT IS UNREAL? CAREFUL, BEFORE YOU ANSWER! IS A GHOST, FOR INSTANCE, UNREAL BECAUSE IT CANNOT BE SEEN OR FELT? THEN WHAT ABOUT AIR, WHICH ALSO CANNOT BE SEEN OR TAKEN BETWEEN THE FINGERS? AND THOUGHTS—WHO CAN HOLD THEM UP AND PROVE THEY ARE REAL? YET THOUGHTS ARE REAL...AS PETER AKROYD FOUND OUT WHEN HE CAME FACE TO FACE WITH THE GHASTLY REALITY OF.....

The GRIM UNREALITY

YOU'RE ONLY A FIGMENT OF MY IMAGINATION! YOU'RE UNREAL, I SAY—
UNREAL!

NO, PETER AKROYD,
I AM REAL! AND
I AM COMING OUT—
ARRRRRR!

A STORM LASHED ACROSS THE BAY WITH INSANE FURY, HURLING WAVES AGAINST THE ROCKBOUND SHORES OF THE SMALL ISLAND ON WHICH STOOD A RAMBLING OLD MANSION! WINDS HOWLED AND SCREECHED LIKE MADDED DEMONS, AND RAIN BEAT A TATTOO ON THE WINDOWS OF THE OLD MANSION!



WITHIN THE LONELY OLD HOUSE, PETER ARROYD ADDRESSED HIS WEEK END GUESTS, ALREADY NERVOUS AND JITTERY, IN TONES OF OMINOUS FOREBODING!

LISTEN! IS THAT JUST THE WIND WAILING? OR IS IT THE HOWLING OF KARZZ, THE DEVIL-DEMON, SEEKING TO CLAW HIS WAY IN FOR HIS HUMAN VICTIMS?

KARZZ? DEVIL-DEMON? WHAT SILLY OLD LEGEND IS THAT, PETER?

0000000000!



ACCORDING TO OLD RECORDS IN THIS HOUSE, KARZZ DRAGGED OFF MANY A SCREAMING VICTIM TO HIS LAIR! I MADE A PAINTING OF THE FRIGHTFUL FIEND, FROM THE DATA!



AND THEN, AS ARROYD SNAPPED ON A LIGHT, LIVID HORROR SPRANG FORTH IN LURID COLORING, SHOCKING THE EYES OF THE UNPREPARED GUESTS!

BEHOLD! THIS IS KARZZ!



GREAT HEAVENS!

NERVES ALREADY UNSTRUNG BY THE RAGING STORM OUTSIDE, ONE OF THE GUESTS SUGGUMBED TO THE PAINTING'S MACABRE MENAGE!



OHMM!

STELLA DOWLING FAINTED!

OH, I'M SORRY! I GUESS I CARRIED MY LITTLE FARGE TOO FAR!

FORGIVE ME, STELLA! YES, IT'S ONLY A SILLY LEGEND! IT SEEMED SUCH AN IDEAL NIGHT TO TELL A STORY OF HORROR! I WAS ONLY TRYING TO ENTERTAIN YOU ALL WITH A FEW THRILLS AND CHILLS!

THEN I WAS THE SILLY ONE, PETER, TO TAKE IT SERIOUSLY! I'M ALL RIGHT NOW!



ODD, HOW PEOPLE FALL FOR IT EVERY TIME! I MADE UP THE STORY IN MY OWN MIND, JUST TO STARTLE GUESTS! AND I ALMOST HAD THEM BELIEVING IT! THEY WERE READY TO BOLT IN FRIGHT! HOW AMUSING!



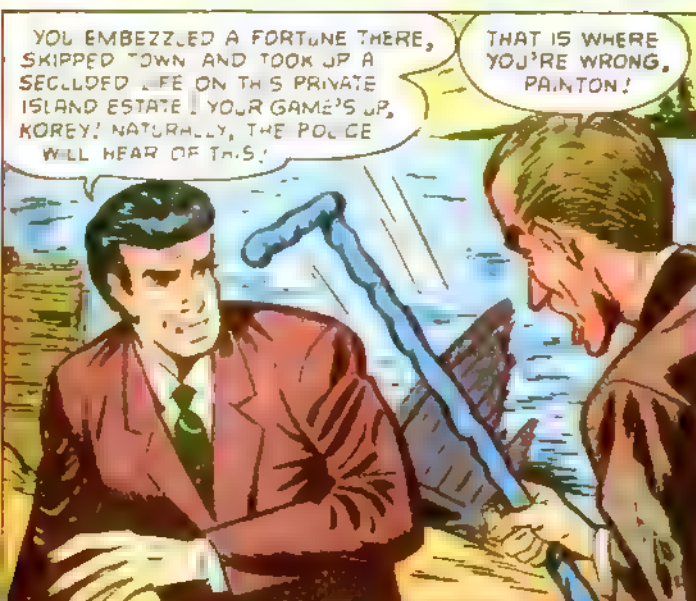
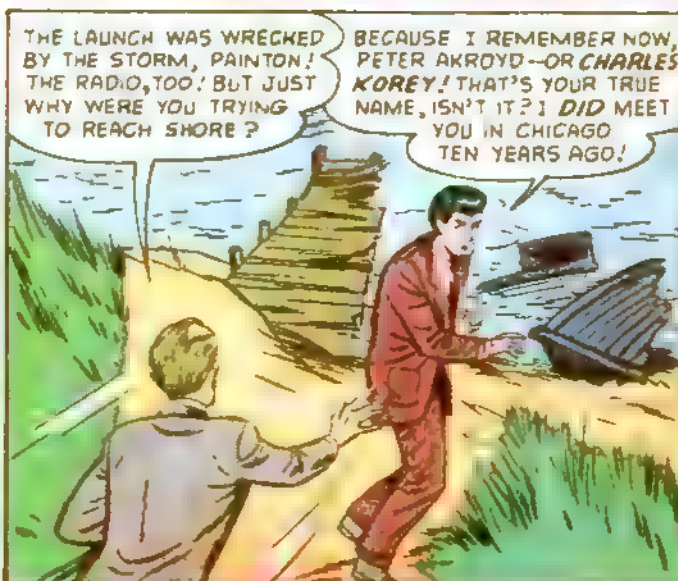
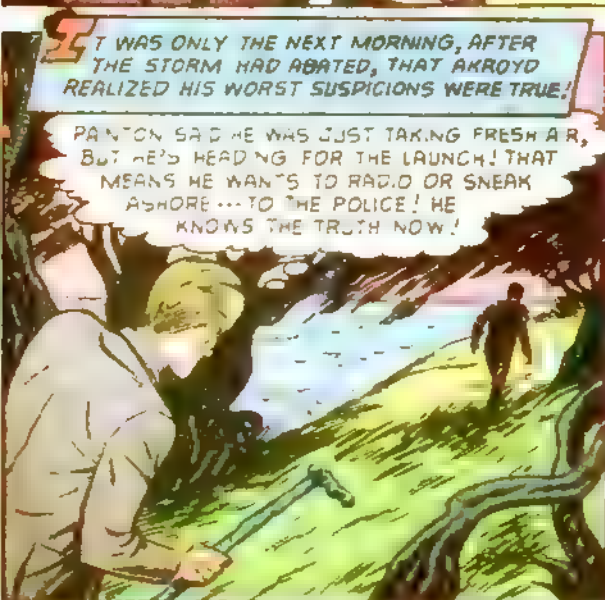
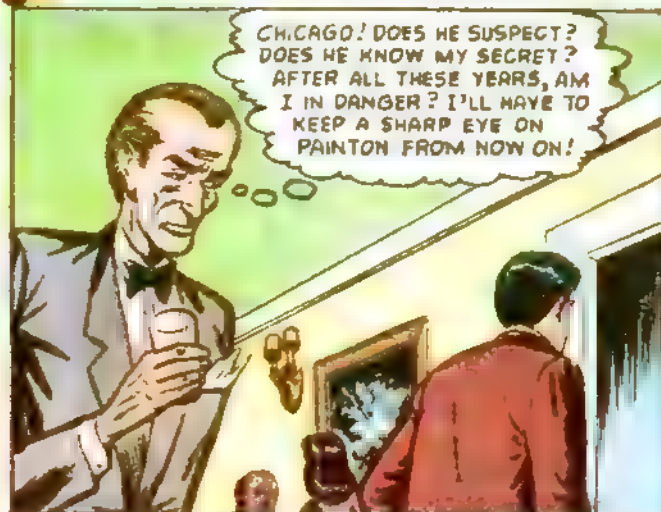
BUT AS THE EVENING WORE AWAY IN LIGHTER PURSUITS, A PANG OF FEAR CAME ALSO TO PETER'S HEART!

CARL PAINTON HAS BEEN STARING AT ME ALL EVENING! WHY? I NEVER MET HIM BEFORE TODAY! STELLA BROUGHT HIM ALONG!





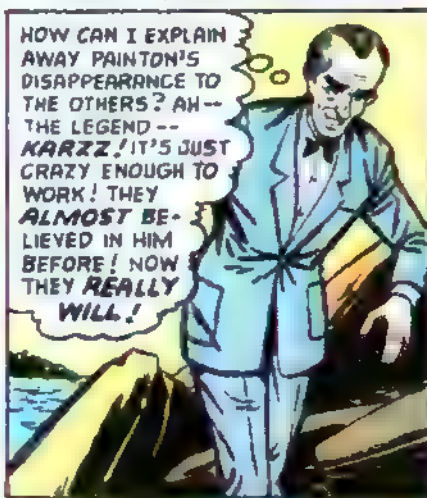
BUT AKROYD WAS LYING! AND NOW OVERWHELMING MEMORIES OF A DARK PAST FLOODED OVER HIM!



I HAD TO KILL HIM! I HAD TO! I COULDN'T HAVE THIS WHOLE THING BLOW UP IN MY FACE! THERE GOES HIS BODY TO THE BOTTOM! MY PAST CRIME IS SAFE! BUT HOW CAN I COVER UP THIS CRIME---MURDER? HOW?



THEN HIS FEAR-CRAZED THOUGHTS CENTERED ON A SOLUTION TO HIS DILEMMA... A SOLUTION THAT WAS FANTASTIC--YET MADLY POSSIBLE!



HOW CAN I EXPLAIN AWAY PAINTON'S DISAPPEARANCE TO THE OTHERS? AH--THE LEGEND--KARZZ! IT'S JUST CRAZY ENOUGH TO WORK! THEY ALMOST BELIEVED IN HIM BEFORE! NOW THEY REALLY WILL!

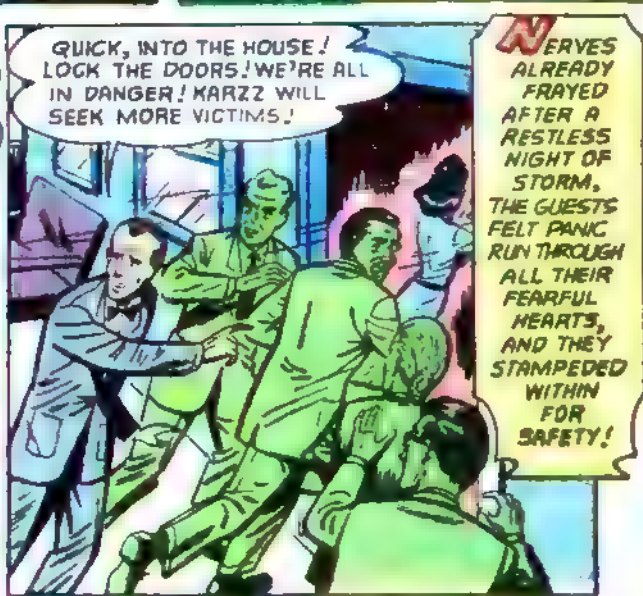


PETER! WHAT'S HE YELLING? WHAT FRIGHTENED HIM? EEEAA! KARZZ! KARZZ! HE-- HE DRAGGED PAINTON OFF!



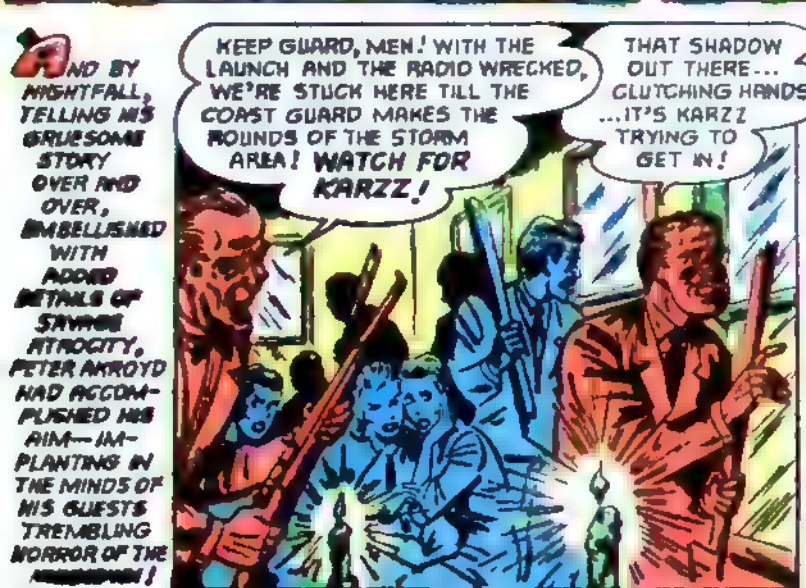
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, MAN? KARZZ IS JUST A LEGEND!

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, TOO! BUT HE'S REAL--HORRIBLY REAL! I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES, AS HE SEIZED PAINTON IN HIS RIPPING TALONS AND DRAGGED HIM OFF! IT WAS HORRIBLE!



QUICK, INTO THE HOUSE! LOCK THE DOORS! WE'RE ALL IN DANGER! KARZZ WILL SEEK MORE VICTIMS!

NERVES ALREADY FRAYED AFTER A RESTLESS NIGHT OF STORM, THE GUESTS FELT PANIC RUN THROUGH ALL THEIR FEARFUL HEARTS, AND THEY STAMPEDED WITHIN FOR SAFETY!



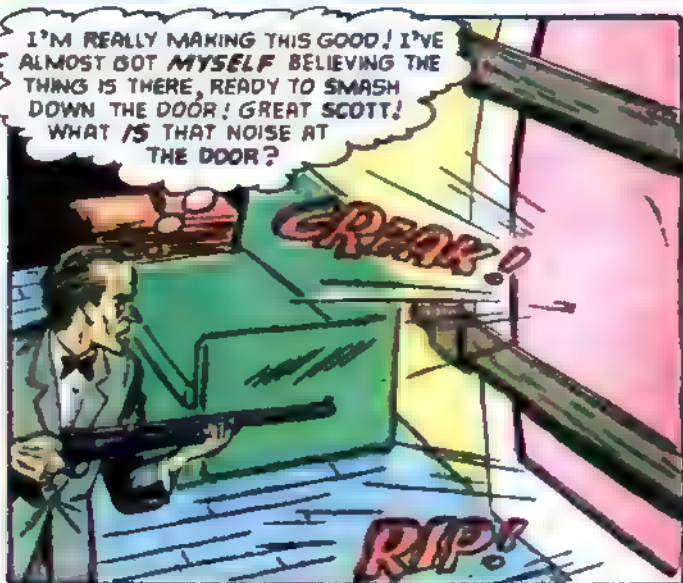
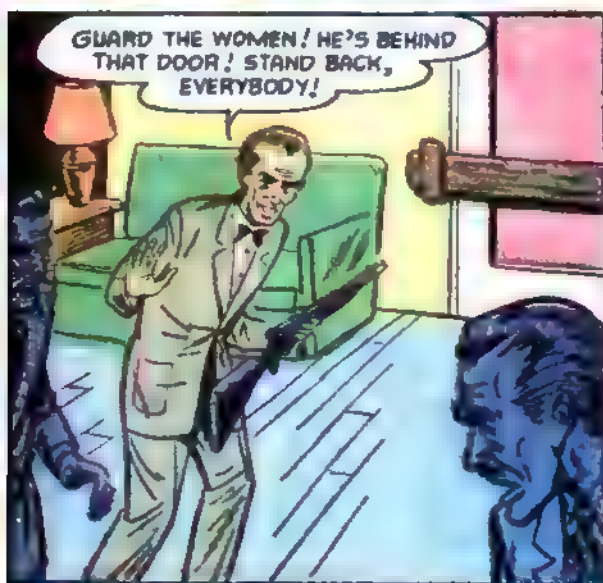
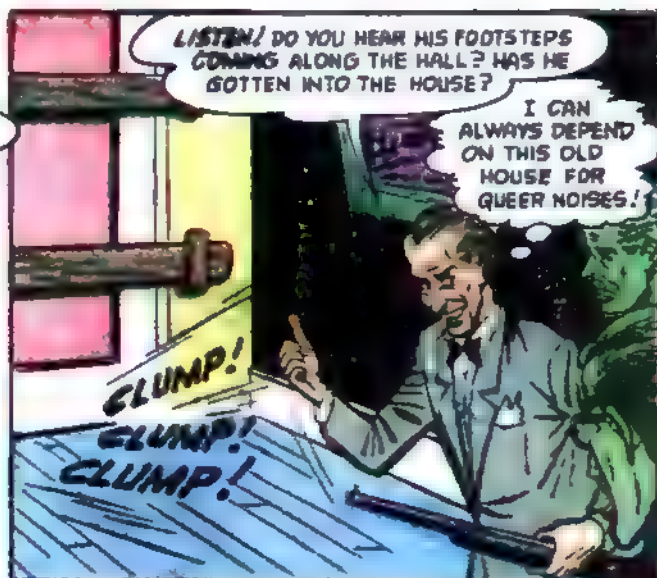
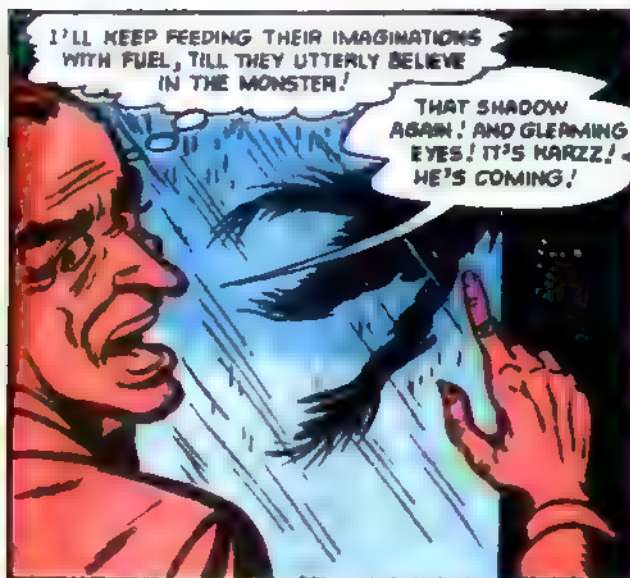
AND BY NIGHTFALL, TELLING HIS GRUESOME STORY OVER AND OVER, EMBELLISHED WITH ADDED DETAILS OF SAVAGE ATROCITY, PETER ARROYD HAD ACCOMPLISHED HIS AIM--IM-PLANTING IN THE MINDS OF HIS GUESTS TREMBLING HORROR OF THE UNKNOWN!

KEEP GUARD, MEN! WITH THE LAUNCH AND THE RADIO WRECKED, WE'RE STUCK HERE TILL THE COAST GUARD MAKES THE ROUNDS OF THE STORM AREA! WATCH FOR KARZZ!

THAT SHADOW OUT THERE... GLUTCHING HANDS... IT'S KARZZ TRYING TO GET IN!



I'M SAFE! IMAGINATION IS MY ALLY! THEY ALL BELIEVE IN KARZZ NOW! BY THE TIME THE COAST GUARD GETS HERE, THEY'LL ALL SWEAR THAT THE DEVIL-DEMON CLAIMED PAINTON FOR ITS VICTIM!

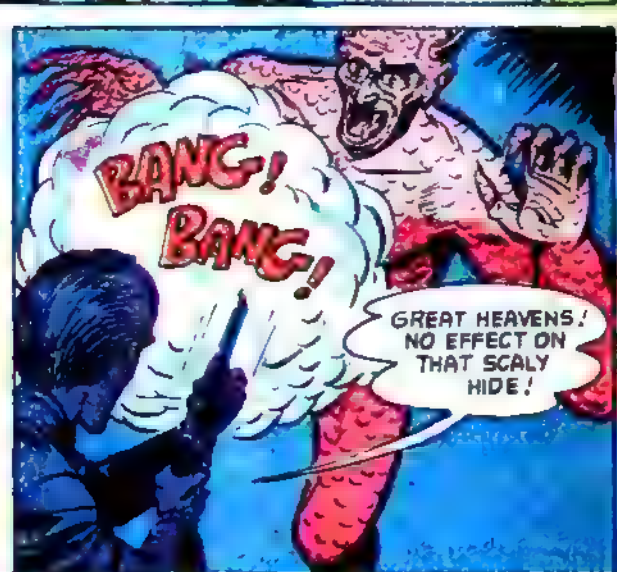




BUT AS THE HIDEOUS MONSTROSITY RAKED AT HIM WITH ITS CLAWING TALONS, AKROYD COULD NO LONGER DENY ITS FEARSOME EXISTENCE!



ROOTED IN TERROR, AKROYD REALIZED THAT THE SPAWN OF HIS OWN IMAGINATION NOW THREATENED HIS EXISTENCE!



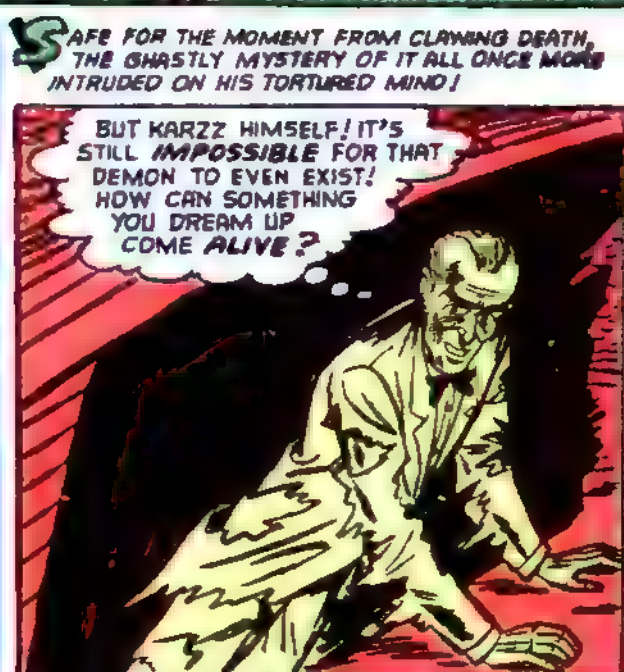
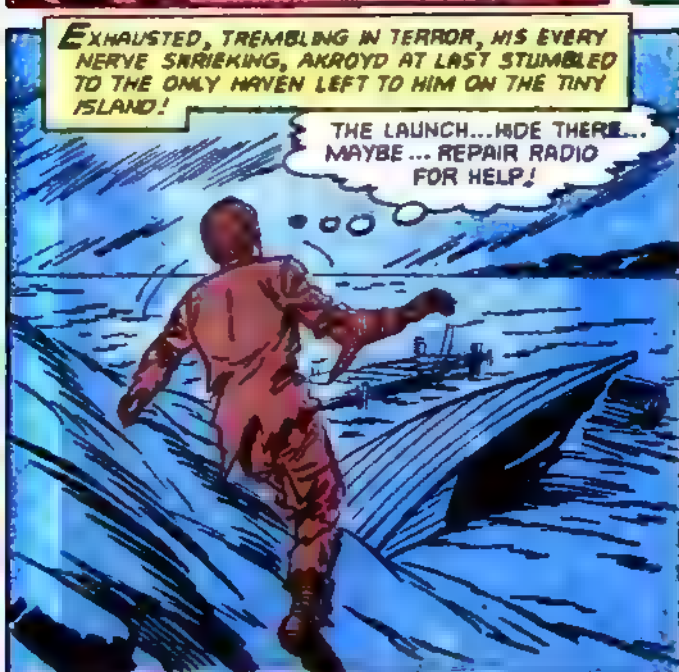
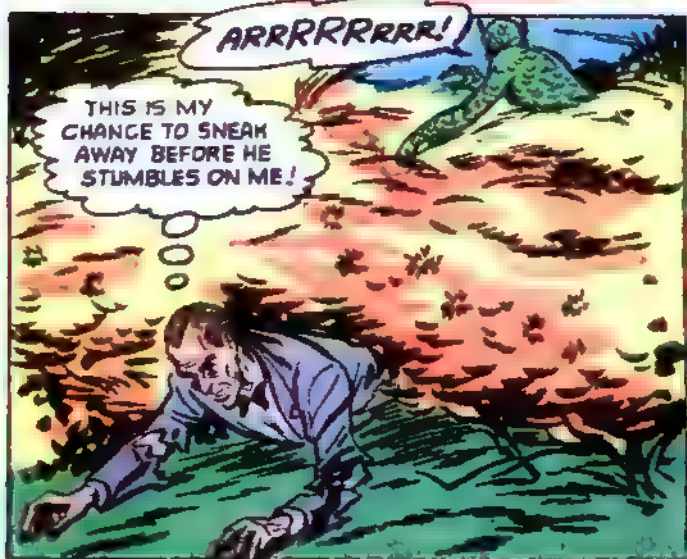
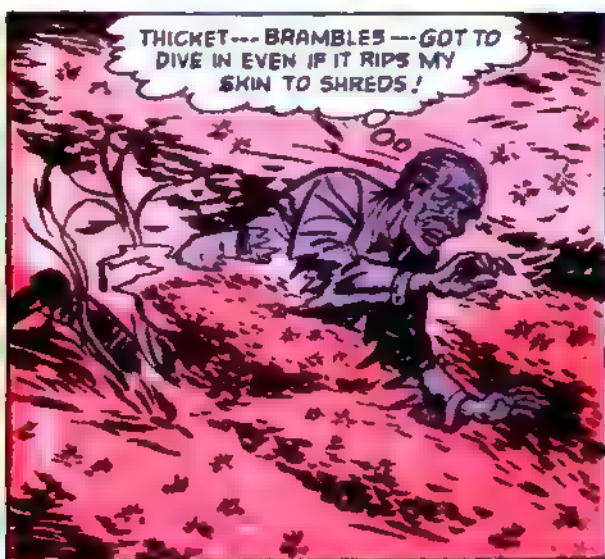
HOW CAN I ESCAPE? WHERE CAN I HIDE? THE BASEMENT...



BUT THERE WAS NO HIDING FOR AKROYD IN THE DISMAL DARKNESS OF THE BASEMENT, FOR WITH HALF-ANIMAL CUNNING THE MONSTER ROUTED HIM OUT OF CONCEALMENT!

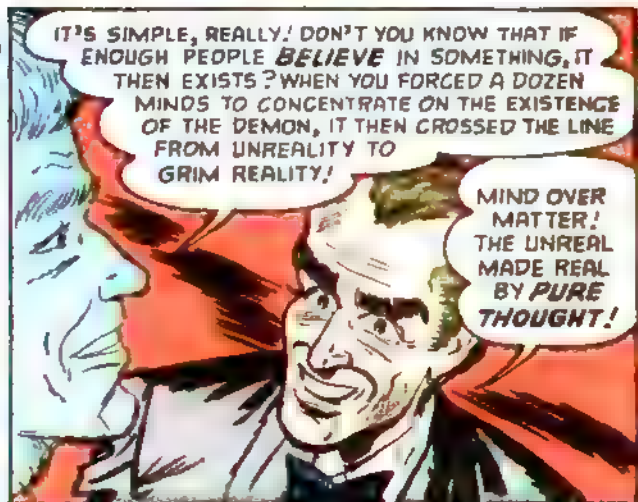
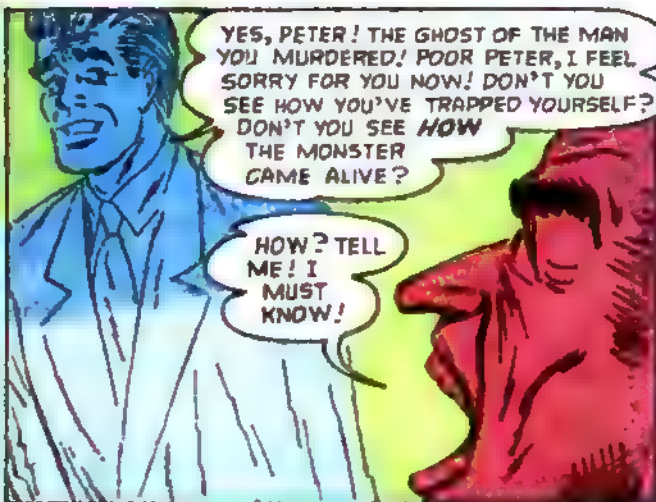


BUT EVEN OUTSIDE IN THE SHROUD OF DARKNESS THAT OVERLAY THE ISLAND, THE NIGHTMARE THAT WAS NOT A NIGHTMARE CONTINUED FOR THE FLEEING, SOUL-SHAKEN MAN!



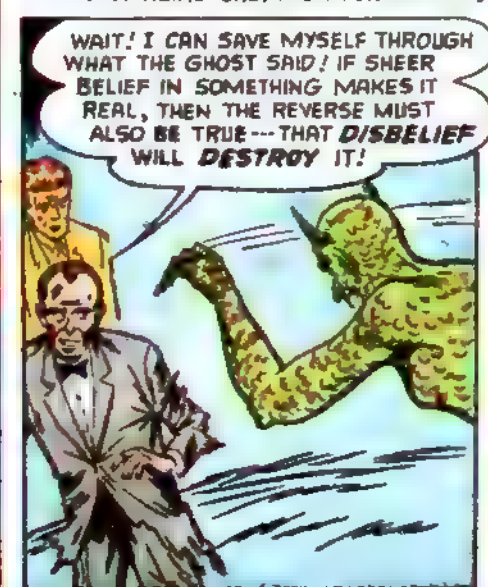


IF
TERROR
ENOUGH HAD
NOT DESCENDED
ON THE HEAD
OF THE
QUAKING
FUGITIVE,
ANOTHER
HORROR FROM
AN UNKNOWN
WORLD
CONFRONTED
HIS EYES!

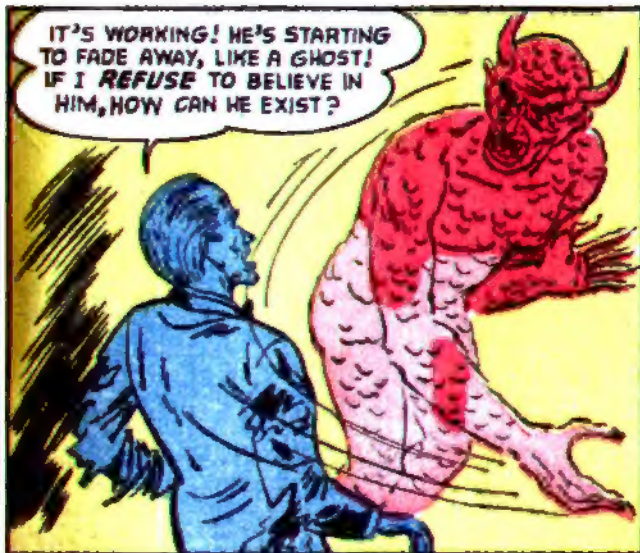


CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL, BUT KARZZ EXISTS! AND HERE HE COMES NOW TO GET YOU---THE PRODUCT OF YOUR OWN TWISTED MIND! YOU HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT YOUR OWN DOOM, FITTINGLY ENOUGH!

THE DEVILISH MONSTROSITY ONCE MORE LURCHED TO SEIZE ITS HELPLESS VICTIM! BUT AT THAT MOMENT, AKROYD'S MADDENED MIND SPUN TOWARD A WEIRD SALVATION FOR HIMSELF!



IT'S WORKING! HE'S STARTING TO FADE AWAY, LIKE A GHOST! IF I REFUSE TO BELIEVE IN HIM, HOW CAN HE EXIST?



I WON! KARZZ HAS VANISHED INTO THIN AIR, JUST AS HE APPEARED! I'M FREE!



THIS IS ALL PERFECT NOW! MY GUESTS ALL SAW THE DEMON WITH THEIR OWN EYES! THEY'LL SWEAR THAT TO THE INVESTIGATING POLICE! THEY WON'T EVEN SEARCH FOR THE CORPSE--- NOT WHEN A MONSTER ATE IT! HAA!



TRIUMPH-
ANTLY
SAFE
FROM THE
VANISHED
MONSTER,
THE KILLER
RAVED ON,
GLOATING
AT HOW
WHAT WAS
PURE HORROR
FOR HIM
BEFORE
HAD NOW
BECOME A
BLESSING
IN
DISGUISE!

HAA! SAFE FROM THE LAW! THE DEMON TAKES THE RAP FOR ME AND I GO FREE! I'M SAFE FROM THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!

SAFE?



AKROYD RETURNED TO THE HOUSE, ONCE MORE CALM AND COOL, READY TO CARRY ON HIS ORIGINAL PLAN TO ESCAPE THE VENGEANCE OF THE LAW!

PERFECT-- PERFECT! I'LL TELL THE OTHERS I ELUDED THE DEMON AND SAW HIM RETREAT TO HIS LAIR! HELLO THERE! I'M BACK--- SAFE!



THAT'S STRANGE! NOBODY SEEMS TO HEAR ME! YET THERE THEY ARE INSIDE! I'LL YELL LOUDER... IT'S PETER! LET ME IN! THE DEMON IS GONE! LET ME IN!



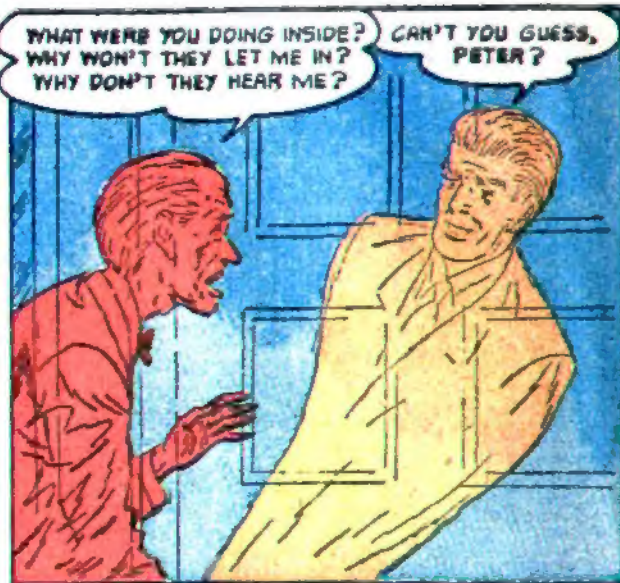
BUT
ARROYD'S
SHOUTS
WENT UN-
ANSWERED!
AND THEN
HE NOTICED
THE GHOST
WITHIN
AMONG THE
UNWARE
GUESTS,
WHISPERING
...WHISPER-
ING WHAT?

WHY DO THEY IGNORE ME? WHAT IS
THE GHOST OF PRANTON DOING
IN THERE?



WHAT WERE YOU DOING INSIDE?
WHY WON'T THEY LET ME IN?
WHY DON'T THEY HEAR ME?

CAN'T YOU GUESS,
PETER?



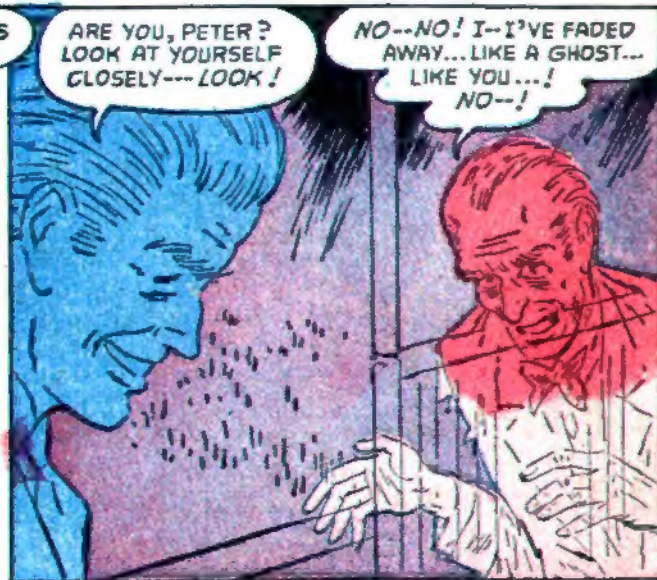
REMEMBER--IF ENOUGH PEOPLE
BELIEVE SOMETHING, IT COMES
TRUE! I WHISPERED IN THEIR EARS,
OVER AND OVER HYPNOTICALLY,
THAT YOU WERE---**DEAD!**

DEAD? BUT THAT'S
RIDICULOUS!
I'M ALIVE!



ARE YOU, PETER?
LOOK AT YOURSELF
CLOSELY---LOOK!

NO--NO! I--I'VE FADED
AWAY...LIKE A GHOST...
LIKE YOU...!
NO--!



YES, PETER--- JUST LIKE
ME! COME ALONG!

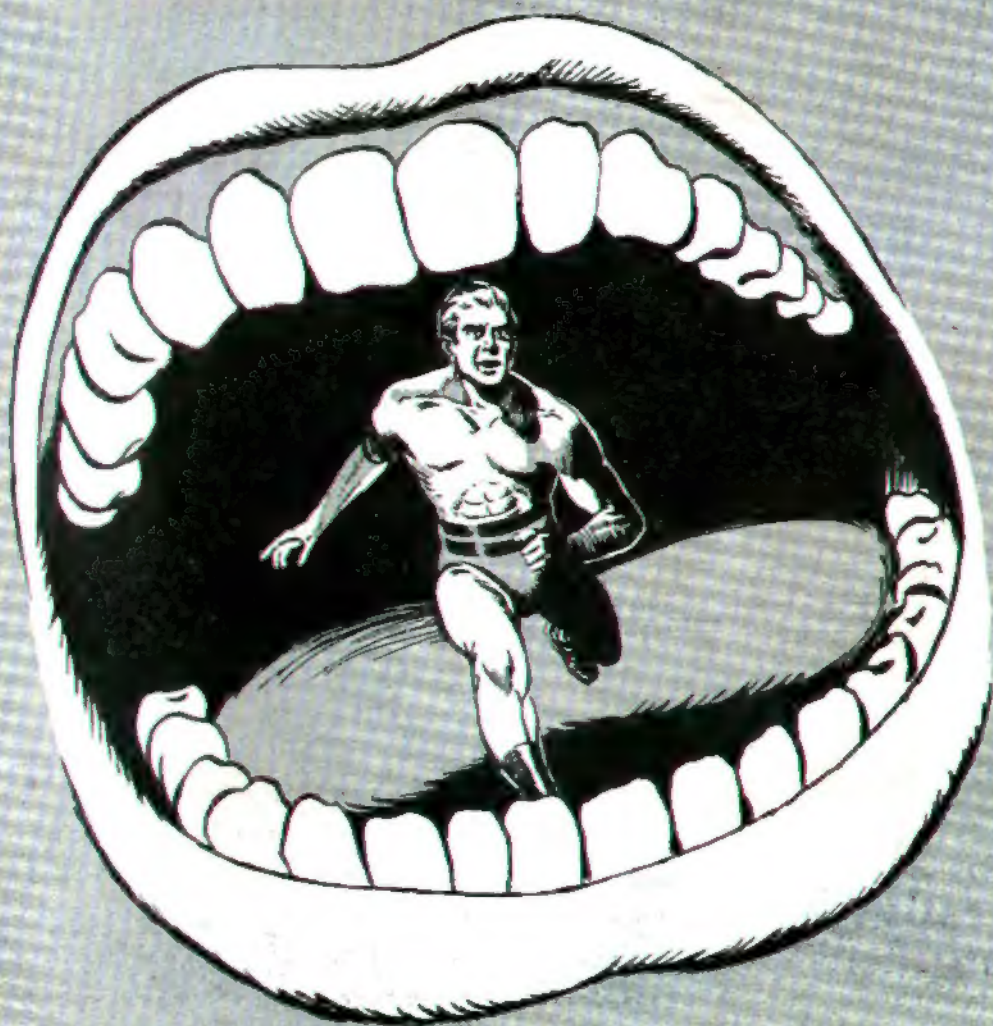


AH HA! I FIND SUCH A CHARMING IRONY
IN IT ALL! YES, PETER ESCAPED THE LAW!
HE DID SUCCEED IN **THAT!** YET TWELVE
PEOPLE SENT HIM TO DEATH--AS SURELY
AS IF THE ELECTRIC CHAIR
HAD BURNED HIS BODY
TO A CINDER!
TWELVE PEOPLE--
LIKE A **JURY!**



INCREDIBLE—

PULSE-POUNDING STORIES OF STRANGE SUSPENSE!



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

**ON SALE AT
YOUR FAVORITE
NEWSSTAND**

10¢

BEWARE!

TERROR TALES

**FROM THE MACABRE
WORLD OF THE
SUPERNATURAL!**

**AS TOLD BY
THE MUMMY**



**ON SALE AT
YOUR FAVORITE
NEWSSTAND
10¢**

